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Dads, Daughters, And Disney: The Historical Trajectory Of Fairy Tale Fathers And Daughters

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DADS, DAUGHTERS, AND DISNEY: THE HISTORICAL TRAJECTORY
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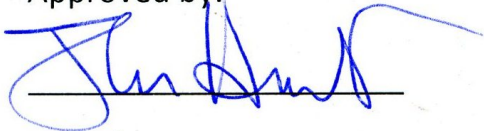
by

Kaitlin Mancino

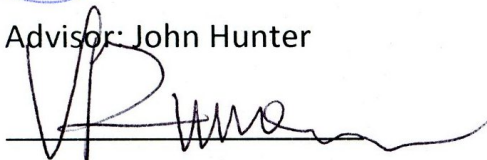
A Thesis Submitted to the Honors Council
For Honors in Comparative Humanities

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ABSTRACT

In my thesis I use a historical approach to close readings of fairy tale texts and movies to study the evolution of fathers, daughters, and marriage within three landmark tales: “Cinderella,” “Sleeping Beauty,” and “Snow White.” Using the works of Giambattista Basile, Charles Perrault, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, and Walt Disney and his cohort of animators, I trace the historical trajectory of these three elements, analyzing both the ways they change and develop as history progresses as well as the ways they remain consistent. Through close and comparative readings of primary sources and films, I demonstrate the power structures and familial dynamics evident through the interactions of fathers and daughters. Specifically, I show that through the weakness and ineptitude of fairy tale fathers, fairy tale daughters are able to gain power, authority, and autonomy by using magic and marriage to navigate patriarchal systems. The work I have done is important because it explores how each tale is a product of the story before it and thus that in order for these tales to continue to survive the test of time, we must not only recognize the validity of the academic merit of the Disney stories, but also remember them and others as we forge new paths in the stories we use to teach both children and parents. Specifically, this work is important because it explores the historical trend evident in the evolving relationships between fathers and daughters. This relationship ultimately it reveals the deep underlying need for family within all of us.

Chart 1. List of Fairy Tale Primary Sources

I used the online database created by D.L. Ashliman through Pitt.edu for all but one of my primary sources. Because of this I am not able to cite page references in my footnotes. Therefore throughout my thesis I will refer to specific authors and tales. You can access the full texts I used by referencing this chart of URL's.

Story	Author	URL
Sleeping Beauty Tales		
"Sun, Moon, and Talia"	Basile	http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0410.html#basile
"The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood"	Perrault	http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0410.html#perrault
"Little Briar Rose" 1812	Grimms	http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0410.html#grimm
"Little Briar Rose" 1856	Grimms	http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm050.html
Cinderella Tales		
"The Cat Cinderella"	Basile	This can be found in Jack Zipes text <u>The Great Fairy Tale Tradition</u> , pages 445-449
"The Little Glass Slipper"	Perrault	http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0510a.html#perrault
"Cinderella" 1812	Grimms	http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0510a.html#grimm
"Cinderella" 1856	Grimms	http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm021.html
Snow White Tales		
"The Young Slave"	Basile	http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0709.html#youngslave
"Little Snow White" 1812	Grimms	http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0709.html#snowwhite
"Little Snow White" 1856	Grimms	http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimm053.html

INTRODUCTION

Fairy tales are a means of expressing cultural values in a setting unimpeded by the limitations of reality. They free us from the constraints of the real world and allow our mores and customs to be explored through the mythical, the magical, and the impractical. At the same time, however, these fairy tales express elements of truth; within them lie the fundamental values and societal realities of those telling the stories. Disguised under ogres, fairies, magical trees and true love's first kiss are expressions of the values, experiences and beliefs of storytellers and their contemporary culture. Fairy tales specifically are capable of this in a way no other genre is because they combine elements of blatant falsehood with deep truth; they use pointedly magical and unrealistic settings to allow broader audiences to comprehend controversial and problematic truths. As prolific fairy tale scholar Jack Zipes explains, "they are informed by the languages that the writers employed, their respective cultures, and the sociohistorical context in which the narrators were created."¹ Therefore the tales not only inwardly express the perspective of the writer, but they also express outwardly to the reader the social norms of times past because their genre that enables the writers to be far more candid.² Fairy tales do this in a way that is specific to their genre because

¹ Zipes, Why Fairy Tales Stick, 41

² One way in which we know this to be true is that the tales were incorporated throughout the western world into the teaching curriculum of children. For more on this topic, see Zipes, Enchanted Worlds, 2002, pages 46-64.

they use common and generally understandable story lines to present deeper and often darker shades to the human psyche. The individual fairy tale, however, does not represent one static moment in history. Rather, fairy tales encompass the many variations and adaptations of that tale throughout history. The observance of these tales reveals both what changes and what remains constant through the stories.

Viewing fairy tales with a grand and historic perspective shows us that Cinderella will always run away from the ball whether she is Italian, French, German, or American. At the same time, though, this perspective also highlights how she gets there: by the heavenly protection of her deceased mother, through a demonstration of individual agency, or simply by the good fortune of a suddenly appearing fairy godmother. These stories encompass such an array of interpretations because with every retelling, authors must be mindful of the authors before them, who they received the tale from. When Charles Perrault sat down in the late seventeenth century to write his *Tales of Mother Goose*, he surely had Giambattista Basile's *Pentamerone* and Giovanni Straparola's *The Fastidious Nights of Straparola* in mind. When Straparola sat in Venice in the early 1500's, it was not without recollection of *The Arabian Nights* and Giovanni Boccaccio's *Decameron*. When finally Walt Disney and his animation team transformed the tale of "Snow White" from literary text to moving picture it was not without knowledge of the work of Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm's *Kinder Hausmarchen*. All of these authors are united by the tales they tell, and the tales themselves are products of a historical lineage too important to be ignored.

In the 20th century, to the chagrin of many scholars, Disney has become the embodiment of the tales, the authoritative and highest word on their legacy.³ Amidst the life-sized replicas of the princess' castles in Disney theme parks throughout the world, the stores in shopping malls around the globe selling princess dresses so "every girl can be a princess," and even princess-themed marathons held annually in Disney World Florida, in the scholarly world the Disney reputation is not so universally hailed. Scholars like Jack Zipes, Henry Grioux, Robert Haas, and Susan Miller have spent decades waging a war in defense of what they think to be the true and authentic history of these tales. In this battle, Disney the corporation is on the one side, protecting their copyrights to their titles, and the literary fairy tale community is on the other side, vying to reclaim the integrity of the historical tales. Before embarking on a discussion of the merits of Disney and their contributions to the tales, however, it is important to recognize the scholarship that has been done largely in spite of Disney.

Although there has been a phenomenal amount of literature written on the fairy tale from historical, sociological, and psychological perspectives, within my work I will primarily rely on the scholarship of four authors: Jack Zipes, Ruth B. Bottigheimer, Maria Tartar and Bruno Bettelheim. From the research I have done, I have found these authors to represent a scope of literary criticism and to have all had valuable impacts on the reading of literary fairy tales. Jack Zipes is primarily involved with the cultural history

³ It has only been in recent years that other organizations and authors have begun to pick up and reinterpret the tales.

and impacts of the tales. His work, emanating primarily from a study of the Grimms, seeks to understand why fairy tales “stick” in modern consciousness through historical contextualization. Ruth B. Bottigheimer takes a feminist approach to the tales, focusing her work largely on representations of gender within the stories. She uses close readings and cross story comparison to highlight the classifications of female characters and understand why they are active or passive based on their characterization. As a German scholar, Maria Tartar focuses her work on the ways the Grimms reinterpret and adapt the tales. Her work often features analysis of the ways the stories change from publication to publication. Finally, Bruno Bettelheim is representative of the psychoanalytical perspective on fairy tales and discusses them in relation to the mental development of children. Through his background in adolescent psychology, particularly abnormal psychology, he explores the benefits of the tales as a means of expression and release for readers. The combination of these four scholars presents an array of points of view and levels of understanding. On the one hand this allows my work to situate itself within the leading scholastic perspectives of the day. However, on the other hand, the use of these four authors also helps set up why my work is different. Unlike the writings of these authors that use the tales to work towards a topical argument (be it cultural relevance or misogyny in the tales), my work emphasizes the historical lineage of the tales themselves. Rather than analyzing one aspect of the fairy tale genre through a number of tales, my work uses close primary source readings centered on the elements of father and daughter characters to show the important connections and

evolutions across the historical timeline of these stories. While my work of course is narrowed to a particular subject, the foundation of my argument rests on the historical perspective I use. This means that when I read the tales, I do so with attentiveness to the previous stories, constantly drawing connections between different texts as an ongoing process, as opposed to closely reading each story on its own and comparing later on.

Beyond the work of these four authors to set the scholarly stage for my thesis, it is also important to look topically at the way gender has been traditionally regarded in the tales. The gender examinations within fairy tale scholarship, however, are not evenly distributed between men and women. Instead, scholarship is focused on mothers, stepmothers, and daughters rules. Such scholarship includes Ruth B. Bottigheimer's The Grimms' Bad Girls and Bold Boys, Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar's The Madwoman in the Attic, Maria Tatar's The Hard Facts of the Grimms' Fairy Tales, and Maria Warner's From the Beast to the Blonde. A common feature to all of these works is that they combine necessary historical foreground in order to analyze the roles female characters play in the tales. Often, this analysis demonstrates the silence of female characters, or their villainization when they do speak. These works also discuss the roles of mothers, the impossibility of presenting a good mother, and have a tendency to justify the actions of the stepmother. For example, Maria Tatar points out the scholarship that has been done on "Snow White" which concludes that the father is not actually gone in the story, but rather is the face in the mirror constantly and harshly

judging the stepmother thus driving her to her horrible actions.⁴ Similarly, in her introduction, Ruth B. Bottigheimer sets up her argument as existing within the frame of her existing ideology, particularly her opinions on feminism and social constraints. She prefaces her work by calling the tales “gloomy in terms of gender and social antagonisms.”⁵ This is only a small sampling of the decades of research and writing that has been done specifically focused on the female side of the gender dynamic. Because this research is so prolific, I focused my own work on the masculine side. I sought to explore what role the men play in these tales and found that, despite often being only a minor character, fairy tale fathers have much to say.

No matter which element of the topic these scholars look at, every piece of literature I have encountered that brings up Disney does so in a negative and condemning light. A prime example of this is the work From Mouse to Mermaid: The Politics of Film, Gender, and Culture which features the writings of sixteen prominent scholars in the fields of fairy tales, pop culture, film studies and history.⁶ Despite the impressive breadth of study included, they all convene on one central point, which is that, essentially, Disney is the evil corruptor of everything good and wonderful about literary fairy tales. For example, in the introduction to the collection of articles, Elizabeth Bell, Lynda Haas, and Laura Sells remark that when they were prohibited from using a title that included the name Disney due to copyright, “Our authors responded to this

⁴ Tatar, 1987, 154

⁵ Bottigheimer, 1987, xiii

⁶ Bell, From Mouse to Mermaid

news with academic wrath and ideas for subversive publishing strategies.”⁷ Ramona Fernandez continues this sentiment and cannot keep herself from making a jab at Disney when, in her discussion of how Disney has permeated our society, she says “Despite Disney’s explicit fakery and its implicit message that it is constructing a place apart, Disney World is a distillation of postmodern everyday reality with the horror excised.”⁸ The demonization of Disney came to be another focal point of my work because, while Disney is changing these tales and earning profits doing so, that does not seem to be unlike every other romanticized fairy tale author. Therefore, one of the undercurrents of my work has been to give the Disney retellings a legitimate voice as genuine contributors to the history of these fairy tales.

Considering that to date Disney has made 131 full-length, animated movies and even the Grimms’ collection of fairy tales contained 210 stories, any analysis of fairy tales must start with narrowing the scope of focus stories.⁹¹⁰ I have chosen specifically to work with the stories of “Snow White,” “Sleeping Beauty,” and “Cinderella.” There are three primary reasons for this. The first and foremost is that I wanted to examine the stories which Walt Disney himself created. As faithful as later animators may or may not have been, for consistency’s sake I found it necessary to use the movies which he personally directed and developed so that I could develop an analysis of steady

⁷ Bell, 1995, 1

⁸ Bell, 1995, 236

⁹ <http://www.disneymovieslist.com/animated-disney-movies.asp>

¹⁰ <http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/grimmtales.html>

motivations. Second, I wanted to focus on princess tales, so that I would work with consistent characters and roles.¹¹ Finally, I found it imperative to only utilize stories which the Grimms had recorded so that I had at least one consistent historical source as well as because the Grimms are a vital part of the Disney fairy tale legacy.¹² These three criteria, in Walt's lifetime, princess focused, and found in the Grimms' collection, left me with my three selected tales.

I further refined my topic to have two key components: the representations of father figures and the relationship between the agency of daughters and marriage. I chose these analytical points because I wanted to explore the role fathers play in these tales and the relationships they have with their daughters. I began my focus on fathers largely because while female figures have decades of analysis, the father figure has been largely excluded from the discussion. Despite his general absence from the stories, the treatment these fathers in the text still present significant implications for the readings of these texts. When the father is there, why is he present and what is he doing? The answer is typically marrying the evil stepmother, but in some cases like that of "Cinderella" he becomes an additional antagonist actively trying to prevent her royal marriage. Further, when the father is absent why isn't he there and who is replacing him? Is it another family member, a prince, or pure magic? Elizabeth Bell believes that

¹¹ This is as opposed to including animal stories like *Bambi* or *Dumbo* or musical movies like *Fantasia*.

¹² This ruled out stories like *Alice in Wonderland* which, while not a princess tale, does meet many of the same criteria of a missing father figure, focused on a young girl, magical elements, etc.

“Disney is often described as the ‘Great Sanitizer,’ a label applied to both applaud and condemn his works.¹³ However, what does it say about American views on family when sanitation means elimination of a father figure who cannot protect his child rather than allowing magic to make up for his failings as it has historically done? The fathers presented in these stories are the antithesis of everything a proper father should be, they fail in their authoritative roles, they fail in their peacekeeper and rule enforcement roles, and, above all else, they fail in their duty to arrange for the marriage of their daughter.

Beyond fathers, my second focus is on what replaced them: the agency of their daughters. Traditionally, scholars have focused on critiquing the patriarchy for the supposed weakness of these figures, yet, in terms of marriage, these daughters play a significant role in making up for the failings of their fathers. While it is true that they work within the patriarchal marital system, it cannot be overlooked that they are still creating a better life for themselves. In tales like Perrault’s where Cinderella doesn’t even try on the slipper that the prince has but simply presents him with its match, where she doesn’t simply let the fairy godmother do all the work but rather suggests which creatures they use for coachmen, it cannot be denied that she plays an active and irreplaceable role in creating her own future. In fact, throughout the entire history of “Cinderella” stories, readers are presented with a trickster, a servant who rises up to go against the orders of her master (her stepmother) and uses magic to subvert being

¹³ Mouse to Mermaid page 7

identified. Through both magic and marriage, fairy tale daughter figures rise up to fill the gaps left by ineffective fathers by seeking for themselves increased social status and a solution to their abusive home lives.

Finally, I have chosen to focus on four authors: Giambattista Basile, Charles Perrault, the Grimm Brothers, and Disney. My thesis is specific to the Western European and American versions of these stories and constitutes the most prolific authors within those traditions. There are other authors of importance who I have purposefully decided not to include. The first is Giambattista Straparola. Although he is the first European known to record folk tales, he does not have versions of any of the stories I write about and therefore is not applicable to my analysis. The second is Marie-Catherine D'Aulnoy. While she does have a "Cinderella" story, "Finette Cendron" in her *Contes des Fetes*, I have not included her because her work is significantly outside of the tradition of the other authors and she does not write versions of either of the other two tales. Most important in my decision of which authors to use, however, is that there are direct ties showing the historical links among the four I have chosen. With Disney as my cornerstone, both the Grimms and Perrault are necessary because Disney specifies that *Snow White* is taken from the Grimms' story and that *Sleeping Beauty* and *Cinderella* are adapted from Perrault. Further, both the Grimms and Perrault were greatly influenced by the writings of Basile making his account not only the earliest recording of these tales in the European tradition, but also making Basile's writing fundamental to understand the origins of their works.

My thesis consists of two primary chapters, one on fathers and one on daughters and marriage. In the first chapter on fathers, I will argue that whether they are absent, minimal or harmfully overbearing, fairy tale fathers represent purposefully bad examples for the reader. This is done both to serve as a warning to readers to be better than these fathers, as well as to demonstrate the burden that will befall a daughter whose father has been neglectful. This chapter is broken up into three key sections, one on each of the tales. In the "Snow White" section, I analyze the role of a story devoid of fathers, in the "Sleeping Beauty" section, I analyze the father who is present but ineffective and minimized, and in the "Cinderella" section, I discuss the father whose active presence is harmful to his daughter. These stories are presented in the order of weakest and most absent to strongest and most powerful. The topic of fathers culminates in explaining that in the father's errors and lapses, the daughter must use the agent of marriage, assisted by magic, to fill his place. This leads into my second chapter where I again go through the tales in the same order, but this time do so to demonstrate the ways daughters gain power and authority in their fathers' absences. Over the course of this chapter, I build up an argument of how these tales use their treatment of marriage to work towards a focus on family and being a daughter. In this chapter, I use a discussion of "Snow White" to show the importance of daughter characters as daughters as opposed to as wives as well as explore the role of magic in aiding daughters. In "Sleeping Beauty," I examine how the strength of the family gains importance throughout the history of the tales. Finally, in "Cinderella," I explore how

the princess is able to gain individual autonomy and agency through marriage. This chapter culminates in a discussion of how daughters come to fill the place of the failed father, and by doing so through marriage they render him permanently useless.

Ultimately, in this work, I argue that the roles and powers of fathers and daughters are directly linked in such a way that, as the tales progress through history, they show an increasing value on family and pre-marital life.

Story	Cinderella	Sleeping Beauty	Snow White
Basile	In the start of the story he loves his daughter deeply and listens to her wishes going as far as to marry at her behest. Mid story he forgets to bring Zezolla a gift from travelling abroad but remembers her stepsisters. By the end of the story he hates his daughter and tells the King not to marry her. He says his daughter is “worthless and a disgrace”	Father loves her dearly. When she falls to the curse he has her locked away in a palace of her own in the middle of the country. Her father removes anything that could remind him of her and sends them away.	There is no father, her mother is impregnated by a rose leaf. Uncle takes the place of a father figure. His wife tricks him so he does not recognize his niece but as soon as he does he throws out his wife and rushes to rescue her. He bestows wealth & honor on her and marries her to a wealthy man.
Perrault	Father plays extremely limited role. We know she fears him to the extent that “does not dare to complain to her father” but that’s it.	When curse is enacted he asks a fairy to put the entire castle to sleep & leaves the castle. He does this so his line of will die out & another family can take his place.	
Grimm 1812	Father remembers Cinderella’s gift this time. Father suspects Cinderella is the masked princess at the ball repeatedly destroys evidence that connects her and the festival. Tells the Prince she is “my dead wife’s daughter, who’s deformed”	Parents play a very limited role in this story. It is clear they love her but they fall asleep when she pricks her finger (automatically, not at their own request). In this story the father is powerless against the marriage outcomes of his daughter.	The stories are vastly different (biological mother as antagonist in one, stepmother in the other) but aside from the rather remarrying in the 1857 edition, there is no mention of a father in this story- the mother is left to run amok.
Grimm 1857			
Disney	Father is said to love his daughter dearly and to have married so that he could give her a good mother. He dies 2 minutes into the movie.	Fathers play a vastly expanded role in the marriage & actions of their children. Union is seen as a political alliance between kings.	The father again dies at the very beginning of the tale and there are no father figures to replace him, only a Prince.

CHAPTER ONE: FATHERS

The fairy tale fathers in “Snow White,” “Cinderella,” and “Sleeping Beauty” epitomize poor role models. Rather than being a strong or guiding presence, they represent the antithesis of what a father should conventionally be. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the times of both the Grimms and Disney, this notion of what a father should be stemmed from an idea that the father was the moral compass of the family. Joseph H. Pleck explains in his article on the historical roles of American fathers that “fathers were viewed as the family’s ultimate source of moral teaching and worldly judgments.”¹⁴ He goes on to explain that in this time period it was believed that “fathers ought to concern themselves with the moral and religious education of the young...[the father] played a key role in the courtship and marriage making of both his sons and daughters, by approving a proposed match and allotting family property to the couple.”¹⁵ This view promotes the father as both the teacher and the arbiter of the future of his children. A father was supposed to teach his children the ways of society and to situate them within it through a marriage. Instead of following through with these duties, fairy tale fathers, when they are present at all, actively work against the well-being of their daughters in terms of social competence and marriage. Further, these fathers would have been expected themselves to participate in the marital norms of the day of democratic marriage. Ralph LaRossa explains, “the rules for a democratic

¹⁴ Pleck, 1992, 352

¹⁵ *ibid*

marriage were that couples should be lifelong friends as well as procreators and coprotectors of the young.”¹⁶ Therefore, the fathers not only fail in being coprotectors, but also in their duty of procreation. These fathers never have subsequent heirs with their new wives-¹⁷ However, their absence is no more helpful than their presence because without protection their daughters always fall victim to subjugation and torment. Disney has a quick and deadly solution to the problematic father figures by killing them swiftly when, by the nature of the story structure, they are unable to be effective. However, the early authors are not so quick to eliminate unfit fathering models and instead allow them to live as examples of both what fathers should not do as well as the dangers of not carrying out fatherly responsibilities. Although fairy tale fathers are never main characters, the narratives frequently make a point of referencing these characters so that through the ways they fail, readers can see the lengths to which daughters must go to in order to make up for the fathers’ incompetence. Examination of these fairy tales is best done in a progression from the least active father in “Snow White,” to an active yet ineffectual father in “Sleeping Beauty,” to a father so terrible he tries to prevent his daughter from marrying the king or prince in “Cinderella.” This transition will demonstrate that there is no difference between a bad father and an

¹⁶ LaRossa, 1997, 34

¹⁷ The role of procreation will be discussed primarily in the case of Cinderella because that is the only tale in which there is both an active and present father and a remarriage.

absent one- all examples are damaging to their daughters and all examples provide warnings to the real world fathers in the audience.

Each of these tales provides its own example of ways for a father to fail in his duties. In “Snow White” stories, the example is that of the absent father. In most versions of this story, the writers have eliminated the father entirely. He is only named in one story and within that tale, he is only allowed into the narrative as a way to introduce the evil stepmother.¹⁸ However, by creating a character who is specifically not present, writers are able to explore what happens to the daughter, to the family, and even to the kingdom when a father is not present. Importantly, this father is also specified as a King, extending the reach of his actions and the treatment of his daughter to a national scale. The role of the father escalates in “Sleeping Beauty,” where the reader finds a present yet typically useless father. Over the chronology of the tales, the focus on what happens after the princess marries decreases while the focus what happens before her marriage increases. This development has implications on the father and her relationship to him because as what happens before her marriage becomes more central, so too does his role. Finally in “Cinderella,” readers are faced a two distinctly different images of father figures. In Perrault’s and Disney’s stories, the audience encounters a Snow White like father who is as absent as is possible while still existing, and whose actions do not impact the plot other than as an introduction for the

¹⁸ This is the 1856 version of Grimms’ “Snow White.” It is worthy of note that this appearance actually happened in 1819 and was carried on until the final 1856 edition.

stepmother. However, in Basile's tale and the Grimms' later 1857 version, the father plays a large role that is a clear impediment to Cinderella's success. What this dynamic shift shows is the degree to which magic must be used as a replacement for the father. All of the tales employ magic, however, when the father is a greater problem, magic becomes more prolific. Conversely, when the father is not a central player, that magic does not have to be so powerful. This distinction is illuminating because the Disney animators shift after *Snow White* from using the Grimms as the basis of their tales to using the more mundane and less radical Perrault versions for *Sleeping Beauty* and *Cinderella*.

I. SNOW WHITE

"Snow White" presents the example of a daughter without a father. In his absence, readers are directed to focus on the highly debated relationship between the youthful Snow White and her jealous mother.¹⁹ However, just because the father does not play an active role does not mean he is not significant. On the contrary, the lack of a father figure is so bizarre that it cannot be ignored, and as this is an important step in seeing the necessity of a father for protection, his absence should not be overlooked. The lack of a father in the tradition of "Snow White" evolves over the history of the tales specifically in terms of how the daughter deals with his loss. The tradition morphs from

¹⁹ For further discussion of this see Maria Warner, *The Beast and the Blonde*; Ruth B. Bottigheimer, *The Grimms Bad Girls and Bold Boys*; Jack Zipes, *When Dreams Come True: Classic Fairy Tales and Their Tradition*

real world replacements, like the uncle in Basile's story and the prince in the Grimms' story, to a mystical enchantment in the Disney version. This transition will become particularly noteworthy and telling about the essential role of fathers and as the historical context surrounding Disney's post-World War One mindset is explored. The transformation from possible to impossible solutions to an absent father will become vital because it changes the message of the story from 'fathers must be replaced by another male figure' to 'no-real world element can fully replace a father.'

The progression of "Snow White" tales begins with the 1634 edition of "The Young Slave," which was published in *The Pentamerone* by Basile.²⁰ This "Snow White" prototype focuses on Lisa, the Snow White figure, her mother Lila, and her aunt and uncle who become responsible for her after her mother's death. The tale says that while Lila is out playing with friends she is impregnated by the leaf of a rosebush, eliminating the need for a male caretaker and completely disrupting the traditional family structure.²¹ The story then skips ahead to the moment in Lisa's childhood when she falls under the sleeping curse.²² While she sleeps her mother dies, but not before encasing Lisa's body in a glass coffin in a hidden room of the estate of her brother, the Baron of Selvascura. Lila makes her brother promise never to enter this room, so he is unaware of the sleeping girl until his wicked wife sneaks into the room and discovers the sleeping

²⁰ D.L. Ashliman, <http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0709.html#youngslave>

²¹ Basile, *The Young Slave*

²² The curse is in the form of a poisoned comb. One day Lila, ignorant of the curse, puts the comb in Lisa's hair. Lisa was eventually woken when the Aunt in a jealous rage yanked Lisa from her coffin by her hair thus knocking out the comb.

Lisa. Although her mother had the protections of a typical family structure and therefore a father so she was able to die in peace, Lisa was not afforded this same luxury. Without a father, the girl is left with no immediate family to care for her, and more disastrously, no male protector to watch over her. In this fatherless state, Lisa is left in the hands of a jealous woman who cruelly enslaves and beats her because Lisa is more beautiful and chaste than she is.²³ This aunt has been given all the powers and authorities of her husband and uses them without restraint. When the uncle does see the badly beaten Lisa and asks his wife about her, she responds, “she was a slave sent her by her aunt, only fit for the rope's end, and that one had to be forever beating her.” The uncle, satisfied with her response, questions the abuses committed by his wife no more.²⁴ However, once the Baron is made aware of the true identity of his niece he acts immediately to right the wrongs of his wife. He is able to step in as an exceedingly fair and just father figure, doling out judgments and appropriate actions. He takes Lisa in as his daughter and gives her the seeming gift of a marriage of her own choosing. Interestingly, earlier in the story when Lisa wakes up, she calls out for her mother. The aunt responds, “I’ll give you a mother, and a father too!”²⁵ Because Lisa never actually had a father, readers could consider that, by her actions, the aunt leads the uncle to discovering Lisa and to stepping in as her father figure. Through this story, readers are

²³ The actions of jealous and wickedly portrayed female figures have been studied at length. For further reading see Sandra M. Gilbert, *The Madwoman in the Attic*

²⁴ Basile, *The Young Slave*

²⁵ *ibid*

presented with a good example of a father, as well as examples of bad and absent ones. The story highlights the dangers of a fatherless child through the abuse of fatherless Lisa, while at the same time celebrating the character of the uncle who performs his fatherly duties once he recognizes Lisa as his kin. Despite the uncle's ultimate success as a father, his presence has been relegated to the very end of the story so that for the majority of the tale Basile can examine what happens without a father.

The progression of the presence of father figures continues in the changes made between the 1812 and 1857 editions of "Little Snow White" published in the Grimms' *Kinder-und Hasmärchen*.²⁶ In the first story, while there is a mother, there is no mention of a father. Readers are not informed of how the mother became pregnant, simply that a fairy informed her that her wish for a child would soon be granted.²⁷ In this earlier version, the Grimms maintain the older tradition of a fatherless Snow White, thus showing the wickedness of a jealous and unchecked mother. However, what is different about this story is that the royalty in question has been elevated from a baron to a king, thus making the woman vindictively holding power a queen. One important consequence of this change is that by making the father a king, as opposed to a noble, the entire story takes on more weighty and serious connotations. With the rise of the story and rise of the father, so too do the implications of his actions become more important. With this shift to monarchy, the repercussions of the treatment of Snow

²⁶ <http://www.pitt.edu/~dash/type0709.html#snowwhite>

²⁷ Grimms 1812, *Little Snow White*

White are elevated from that of a simple father and daughter, to that of a father and country as well. This is in part because, historically, rulers were seen as the fathers of their country with the political figures making up a family.²⁸ Paternalism is the social practice of treating authority figures as fathers and the institutions over which he reigns as children. In this custom, “fatherly care serves as a legitimating metaphor to characterize how those in authority should treat individuals or groups not related to the paternalist.”²⁹ This practice has held a vital place in the historical rule within societies that feature hierarchical social structures

Besides the adaptation to monarchy, the Grimms also feature another important change: the mother figure in the 1812 story becomes a stepmother in the 1857 story. This change is vastly more revolutionary than in just changing the role of mothers and mother-daughter relationships because it is the first time in the legacy of this story being examined that there is a named father figure.³⁰ In the 1812 story, the narrative opened with the queen wishing for a beautiful child and that wish being granted by a fairy. In this later tale, however, the queen is said to die in childbirth and “a year later the king took himself another wife.”³¹ This is the only line in the text that mentions the father, yet the way the story does this is by defining him by his marriage to the wicked stepmother. It is only in the act of marrying- neither ruling nor fathering, simply

²⁸ Pleck, 1974, 583

²⁹ Pleck, 1974, 583

³⁰ By “legacy” I am referring to the history of authorship. This change actually first occurs in the Grimms’ work in the 1819

³¹ pitt.edu- Grimms 1856- *Little Snow White*

marrying- that the father figure emerges and after he performs this duty he disappears in the text. What is also clear here is that he is not identified as a father, rather only as a king and as a husband. Even though that is his role, he neither is named to be a father nor carries out the duty of a father. Although readers know he is present and as the first queen's husband is Snow White's father, his character is not acknowledged as such and does not act on that duty.

By bringing up the father through the lens of a king remarrying, the story also opens itself to the problem of why such a powerful man married such a vile woman. As a king, he has a responsibility to his kingdom, yet he not only allows this terrible wife into his own kinship and monarchical family, but also allows her to use his power to bend youthful innocents to her whim.³² In calling attention to his presence, and specifically by naming him as king rather than as husband or father, the story highlights his failings as a ruler. He is not only a bad father, but also, even more disturbingly, a bad king. His appearance reminds readers that there should be a power stronger than the queen; a power who could temper her authority. The king should be in a position to prevent her corruption from infecting his family and his nation yet he stands back and allows her to use his power to further her vanity and selfish desires. His failure to restrain her contributes to the idea that he is absent in every meaningful way. Even when he is named in the story, the father figure of the "Snow White" narrative is one

³² For more on the role of a wicked female, as mother or stepmother specifically, see "From the Beast to the Blonde" by Marina Warner, especially pages 201-241

who is simply not there and, true to form, this father is present neither to protect his daughter from possible homicide nor to protect his country from the reign of a wicked queen.

The problem of the named but absent ruler is critical because of how he is replaced. The one common instance of a “father” in most of the “Snow White” stories is when the prince, after waking Snow White, tells her he will bring her back to his father’s castle where they will be married. In dynastic terms, this is problematic because this is a foreign prince and a foreign king. Snow White’s father, the king, is directly replaced by another king and another prince. While this marriage might seem like a good thing for Snow White, it is not beneficial for the nation who loses its only heir and whose hope must be placed in a foreign ruler.³³ Without a strong leader the country must place its future in the hands of a foreign land. To the Grimms’ Germany that is just beginning to attempt unity, this is a devastating point and a significant weakness.³⁴ The story demonstrates that the absence of a father is not acceptable because even when he is replaced it is under the worst circumstances possible where the foreign savior would

³³ While the marriage is supposed to be happy, it is also worth pointing out that Snow White, the princess and only mentioned heir to her land, is essentially kidnapped and forced to marry a foreign prince. In the story the Prince brings her back to his castle while she is asleep, removing her from her lands without any approvals by those in power (like his or her father) and forces her into marriage. This demonstrates the point that being “saved” by a foreigner is not a desirable outcome and does not come by peaceable means but rather by force and dominance.

³⁴ According to Zipes, the Grimms were politically highly affected by the unstable political atmosphere in Germany while they were writing the tales. For more on this see Zipes’ work From Enchanted Forests to Modern Worlds, particularly chapter one.

then take over Snow White's kingdom. The replacement of the father figure by other non-familial male figures continues with the theme of a real-world attainable replacement. While the choices for father substitutes are less than desirable, they are still realistic. A husband, a father-in-law, these are roles that can be filled outside a fairy tale book. Like the uncle in Basile's version, what is essential is that there are mechanisms for a fatherless girl to go through in order to regain that presence and protection in her life. However, despite the real-world potential for these solutions, they still serve as a warning because, in terms of monarchical authority, they are abominable replacements. Using a prince and father-in-law as replacements for a faulty father is functional, but doing so comes at the expense of the autonomy of Snow White's kingdom.

The opening credits of Disney's 1937 *Snow White* immediately tell the audience that this is a story adapted from the Grimms' fairy tales.³⁵ However, what Disney portrays is an odd mix of multiple versions of the Grimms' stories. They combine the 1812 story's complete lack of any reference to a father with the 1819/1856 version's adaptation of a stepmother. The opening lines of the movie say that, "Once upon a time there lived a lovely princess named Snow White. Her vain and wicked stepmother the queen feared that one day Snow White's beauty would surpass her own."³⁶ The audience sees that the character being portrayed is a stepmother so there must have

³⁵ Disney, *Snow White*, 0:00:36

³⁶ Disney, *Snow White*, 0:01:52

been a father not only to father Snow White herself, but also to marry the evil queen. This father, however, makes no appearance, retaining the problem brought up in the Grimms' story of a queen with unchecked authority, a country at the mercy of a wicked ruler, and a deficit in the protection of Snow White that must be filled. From the start of the movie, Snow White wishes "for the one I love to find me."³⁷ She does not wish for a father who cannot be there, but rather for a husband who can be present. This would seem to harken back to the very attainable replacement of a prince in the Grimms' story but Disney provides a vital added twist. Disney specifies that the only thing which can wake Snow White from the sleeping curse is true love's first kiss; a magical answer to a magical curse. Rather than providing a real world solution to the missing father, Disney only provides a magical one. This demonstrates that when the father figure was ineffective or absent, it was acceptable to replace him with another male figure. However, when the father is meant to be a good example, when Disney makes it clear they are only willing to promote the benevolent patriarch, it is unacceptable to replace him in any literal sense. Therefore Disney gives the audience magic as the answer to the curse. The prince, a real figure, might enable the curse to be lifted by being the true love, but it is only because of the nature of the curse that it is able to be broken. Without her father, Disney's Snow White must rely on a magical loophole to be woken up.

³⁷ Disney *Snow White* 5:00

II. SLEEPING BEAUTY

The father figures of “Sleeping Beauty” play a far more active role than those of “Snow White” simply by their presence. However, this does not make them positive role models; rather they are used to display a new type of weak father figure, the father who tries to fulfill his duties and fails. Worse, after he fails to protect his daughter, these fathers give up and disappear from the story. Once Sleeping Beauty falls under the sleeping curse the father is eliminated from the story, magic becomes the daughter’s means of protection, and a foreign prince is required to save her and save the kingdom. Like in “Snow White,” here too we see the problem of a king who fails and must be replaced by a foreign ruler. These stories play greatly on the expansion of a family dynamic, being akin to a national dynamic in which the father’s successes and failings have nationwide consequences. This is because in all of these tales, once Sleeping Beauty falls asleep, so does the entire castle and they do not wake up until a foreigner comes to save the princess. Along with this element of the story, it is apparent that the fate of the kingdom becomes dependent not on the king or his actions, but rather on the marriage of the daughter independent of her father’s influence. Through the chronology of these stories, what is evident is that until Disney, with each retelling of the story the title princess becomes less and less important while the male figure who is meant to protect her becomes increasingly important. This will all change when Disney picks up the story because Disney revolutionizes the plotline. They enact a new vision for the story primarily by taking the sleeping curse, traditionally at the start of the story,

and moving it to the very end of the movie. Just as Disney made adaptations to ennoble the father in “Snow White,” so too here Disney uses this shift to create a dynamic and laudable father figure in direct opposition to the failures before him. Ultimately, where the earlier tales presented an increasing focus on marriage, Disney is instead showing the growing need for a strong and capable father figure. This is important because Disney, through these changes, is altering the way family structures are used in narratives so that the father figure is ennobled and above reproach.

Basile’s *Sun, Moon, and Talia* is the earliest recorded European version of “Sleeping Beauty” and opens the chronology of these stories with a tale primarily focused on what happens after Sleeping Beauty, here named Talia, wakes up from the curse. The story begins with a critical emphasis on the relationship between Talia and her father. It says that, “There once lived a great lord, who was blessed with the birth of a daughter, whom he named Talia.”³⁸ This introduction notably does not include a mother. Without a mother to share the emotional burden of a child, the father is shown to be so enamored with his daughter that it cripples him when she falls victim to poison.³⁹ Despite his attempts to protect her by banning anything associated with flax from his household, Talia still manages to accidentally come across flax and succumb to the poison. The father is so distraught by the fate of his daughter that “he closed the

³⁸ Basile, *Sun, Moon, and Talia*

³⁹ In this story there is no villain. Instead, Talia’s horoscope shows that she will be poisoned by a piece of flax, leading the King to place a band on flax.

doors and abandoned forever the house where he had suffered this great loss.”⁴⁰

However, while the narrative says he abandoned his daughter’s body and the house which reminded him of her, in actuality this action leads to his own removal from the tale. Despite the fact that this occurs only about 250 words into a roughly 2000-word story, after he closes the doors of his household he is not seen again in the story. After his departure both from his castle and from the story, there is a small section about what happens to Talia while she is asleep and how she is woken up, namely her interactions with the passing King. The remainder, roughly three quarters of the tale, is spent on the actions of the King’s jealous wife. There are two important takeaways from the role of the father in this story. The first is that he plays a very small role in the story because he abnegates his responsibility to his daughter once she falls asleep; the second is what happens to Talia as a result of this denial of his duties. Although his role might be small, this father still fails in protecting his daughter more than any other father in this tradition. After he abandons her and his household, a king passing by in a hunting party comes across her. After breaking into the house and finding the sleeping Talia, he rapes and impregnates her.⁴¹ This sequence of events shows that the father has failed tremendously not only in protecting his daughter, but also in protecting his lands. The passing king is able to enter his lands frequently on hunting trips, enter the King’s

⁴⁰ Basile, *Sun, Moon, and Talia*

⁴¹ This action actually leads to Talia waking up, though. In the story she manages to give birth to twins while still asleep. Once born, the twins look for a breast to suckle but instead find the finger where she had come into contact with the poison flax. In their attempts to drink, the babies suck out the poisoned flax, waking her up.

unguarded castle, and take advantage of his sleeping daughter. All of this occurs without the father being made aware that anyone has come across the castle, let alone that his daughter has woken up. He has shunned all contact with the people and lands he is supposed to be responsible for. However much his participation presents him as a bad father figure and a warning to others about what may happen to unprotected daughters, his role is still minor in the scheme of the story. As mentioned before, the vast majority of this tale occurs after Talia has woken up when the King's evil and jealous wife discovers her husband has taken a mistress. The focus of this story is therefore on how the father is replaced by the foreign king and Talia's life with that replacement figure, rather than the father himself.⁴² To add to this point, the father does not have a single line of direct speech in this text; he is a silent failure who rejects his duties as soon as they become too emotionally difficult.⁴³

Perrault's "The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood" tale acts as a perfect bridge between Basile's story and the Grimms' story. This is because it takes foundational elements of Basile's story, such as the father leaving the castle where his daughter has fallen asleep, but mixes in magic to a much greater degree. This magic is pervasive from beginning to end; for example, the tale opens with a fairy festival held in honor of the princess's birth at which the girl becomes cursed. Once asleep, fairies reappear to put

⁴² As will be discussed in Chapter 2, Talia does not actually play much of an active role in her own story either. This story talks more of the jealous wife than any other character and focuses on her efforts for revenge.

⁴³ Talia does not have any direct speech either and only has two moments of indirect speech.

the rest of the castle to sleep and after she has woken up, Sleeping Beauty must overcome her husband's ogre-mother. Magic becomes a central point in this story because it is used to replace the father figure and thus presents a key change between Basile and Perrault versions. In Basile's tale, Talia is left unprotected. While there is mention of fairies helping her briefly after her children are born, Talia is still left alone in the woods and is in fact taken advantage of in the absence of other protection. In Perrault's story, however, the magic serves to protect Sleeping Beauty for the duration of her sleep, casting up a giant barrier that prevents any visitors from approaching until the time of the curse is over. Here magic does what neither father can do. Both fathers try to protect Sleeping Beauty from falling under the curse, but neither succeeds in protecting her once she has fallen to it. Instead, in Perrault's story, once she has fallen asleep a fairy comes to cast the entire castle under a sleeping spell as well so that the princess will have attendants when she wakes up. This fairy does not, however, put the king and queen to sleep. The father puts out a proclamation that no one should come near the castle but, as the story explains, "This, however, was not necessary, for in a quarter of an hour's time there grew up all round about the park such a vast number of trees. . . that neither man nor beast could pass through."⁴⁴ The father attempted to take action to protect his daughter but his effort was nothing compared to that of the fairy magic. It is still worth noting, however, that the father tries and is given a greater role in the story for it. Unlike Basile's father who appears and disappears in less than a quarter

⁴⁴ Perrault *The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood*

of the tale, Perrault's father plays a role for roughly half of the story, demonstrating a somewhat increased concentration on the duty of the father to protect the daughter and a somewhat reduced role of the husband to take his place.

The Grimms make a drastic change to the story that significantly moves the focus of the text away from the husband-wife dynamic towards an emphasis on the father's role within the story. Unfortunately for their father figure, this shift only serves to even more highlight his ineffectiveness and limitations. The change they make is to cut the length of tale nearly in half reducing Sleeping Beauty's entire post-curse, married life to "Then the prince and Brier-Rose got married, and they lived long and happily until they died."⁴⁵ Thus the entirety of the story consists of the banquet the father throws in honor of his daughter, his attempt to protect her, the fortifications of the castle after she falls under the curse, and how the prince finds her. Rather than giving the father a larger role, this change instead diminishes the roles of everyone else making his few actions more significant in the now vastly shorter story. This shift is a great step away from the focus on marriage and towards responsibilities of the father, which ultimately serves to highlight the ways in which he fails and emphasize the warnings to fathers in the audience why they must fulfill their duties. Although this shift could be seen as more of a critique of the patriarchal system and its failings, it is more likely that it is a specific admonition to fathers because it does not present other alternatives. The story presents a breaking point in which the father does his duty and the system or he doesn't and

⁴⁵ Grimms, 1812, *Little Brier Rose*

magic must step in as a remedy. There are no real world alternatives to the father fulfilling his responsibilities and thus it is more likely a warning about the dangers of not upholding the system.

Aside from eliminating almost half the tale, the Grimms' story makes another significant change from Perrault's version. In Perrault's story everyone was cast under the sleeping spell except for the king and queen, who were able to leave their castle. In the Grimms' version, however, the father falls asleep along with the kitchen maids and animals. This father, unlike those before him, is powerless not only against the sleeping curse, but also in protecting himself from falling under a spell. Despite his monarchical status, he is incapable of protecting his daughter, his household, and even unable to protect himself. Adding to this humiliation, the role of protector is reversed between him and his daughter. Rather than the daughter relying on her father for protection, the King and his entire household is completely dependent on Sleeping Beauty to rescue them from the sleeping spell. Because the fate of his kingdom rests on his daughter and not on him, he has failed as king as well. However, it is strange that this is asked of him because the magic of a spell is not something he could overcome. While he is portrayed as weaker than previous fathers because he fell under the spell, there is no way he could have avoided this; it is purely by chance and the whim of a fairy. This strange contradiction between what the father must do, and subsequently fails at doing, and the insurmountable forces working against him shows that the family system he is in does not work. This is also why it is important that the Grimms are calling greater

attention to the father specifically because his inevitable failure demonstrates that a daughter cannot remain reliant on the protection of her father forever. In this story, she must become a wife in order to be saved because her father is not able to protect her indefinitely. This point is advanced when the way she fell under the curse is considered. The story says that, "One day, when she had just reached her fifteenth year, the king and queen went away, leaving her all alone in the castle."⁴⁶ It is at this moment, when she is old enough to be under consideration for a royal and political marriage, and when the father has spread himself too thin trying to protect her and rule effectively, that she is compromised and falls under the curse. By focusing more on the father and the way he fails, the story is representing the limitations of a father and the dire consequences when he fails to recognize them for himself. Sleeping Beauty's father knows that it is in her fifteenth year that she is supposed to fall under the curse, yet he goes away anyway. He does this not because he does not care, but rather because he has exceeded his capacity for parental responsibility.⁴⁷

Like the Grimms' tale, Disney's *Sleeping Beauty* does not deal with what happens after Sleeping Beauty's marriage beyond that it happened and that it was happy. However, unlike the Grimms who spend almost half their story on how the Prince finds and wakes Sleeping Beauty, Disney shifts this focus to her waking life. They revolutionize

⁴⁶ Grimms, 1812, *Little Briar Rose*

⁴⁷ We know that it is not from lack of concern because the beginning of the text talks about how difficult it was for his wife to become pregnant, how much they desired a child, and how greatly he loved her.

the story by giving Sleeping Beauty a childhood and devoting the majority of the tale to her and her interactions as opposed to the other characters.⁴⁸ This is important both for its implications in the story and its implications for the audience. Within the story, this shift creates stronger inter-familial bonds. Despite the necessary separation between Sleeping Beauty and her father because of the danger Maleficent presents through her evil magic and curse, the story still portrays the perspectives of both characters. This enables the king to show audiences how much he misses his daughter, how much he desires her safety, and how hard the distance is on him as well. On a more basic level, however, this is the only story in the tradition that characterizes the father and gives him a personality and depth. Disney is clearly drawing attention to the importance of the father over everything else not only because the story focuses on him and his relationship with his distant daughter more than any other element of the story, but also because he is one of the very few fathers in the entire Disney catalogue that is identifiable beyond his role as father and/or monarch.

Disney's characterization of the father, which is unique both in the tradition of "Sleeping Beauty" and in the Disney canon, raises an essential question: why is he allowed to live and why is he given such importance? The answer lies in his effectiveness. This is one of the only rulers in the Disney tradition that is seen actually

⁴⁸ What Disney gives her is not exactly a childhood since it really only focuses on the day of her sixteenth birthday. However, this focus gives clarity and detail to the life she led up until that point. It acknowledges her youth this way and sets itself apart from every other tale in doing so.

ruling. Specifically, in the movie, the King arranges a marriage for his daughter based on political alliances. The movie explains that “fondly had these monarchs dreamed their kingdoms to unite” through the marriage of their children; however despite their friendship this was not an easy settlement.⁴⁹ Throughout the story he must maintain the terms of this agreement and negotiate with the other king.⁵⁰ In these actions we see a king who is fulfilling his responsibility to his people by carrying out his duties to arrange for an heir to the throne. Further, this character succeeds in fulfilling his role as father as well. Unlike every other version of the Sleeping Beauty character, this one must be directly enchanted in order to fall under the curse. In previous stories the curse was often expressed as an accident or left ambiguous. In an especially telling moment, Perrault’s story clearly says that the woman who leads to the enactment of the curse “did not know who she was” before letting Sleeping Beauty try the spindle.⁵¹ The reason this moment is so important is that the opening of the Disney movie says the film is adapted from Perrault’s version of the tale.⁵² This means that Disney purposefully changed the story from an accident- which would be a lapse in the king’s authority and power- to an intentional work of magic outside of the scope of the father’s domain.

Even worse, Perrault’s father figure continues to make two significant errors that

⁴⁹ Disney, *Sleeping Beauty*, 0:04:34

⁵⁰ After Aurora and Phillip meet they both express a desire to not carry out the arranged marriage, this creates a conflict between the two kings in which the other king accuses Aurora of thinking his son is not good enough. Aurora’s father must mitigate this situation.

⁵¹ Perrault “Sleeping Beauty”

⁵² Disney, *Sleeping Beauty*, 0:00:54

directly lead to the curse. The first is that, knowing that the time of the curse is on hand, the father still goes “to one of their houses of pleasure” thus leaving Sleeping Beauty alone.⁵³ The second is that his proclamation against spindles proves to have been ineffectively instituted because the woman Sleeping Beauty finds spinning “had never heard of the king's proclamation against spindles.”⁵⁴ In Perrault's tale, it is the explicit failings of the father which cause Sleeping Beauty to fall under the curse. That is not so in the Disney story, where it is by magic, not mistake or lapse of the father, that Aurora falls under the spell. In Disney's story, the glowing green dot which enchants Aurora shows that Maleficent must go to extreme lengths in order to bypass the king's protection. Although Maleficent does manage to subvert the father's intentions, her success is not what matters in this case. What actually matters here is that magic had to become a far greater influence on the story in order to overcome the king's effectiveness and further that audiences cannot judge the father harshly for failing in the end. He is set up against the impossible odds of a wicked witch who is far more powerful than any of her previous counterparts. Earlier villain figures from the “Sleeping Beauty” tradition are usually set up as elder fairies who were directly slighted. They were not evil to begin with but rather do an evil deed to right the wrong against them. In the Grimms' and Perrault's stories, the fairy who casts the curse is directly insulted by

⁵³ Perrault, “*Sleeping Beauty*”

⁵⁴ *ibid*

the king when he fails to invite her to the christening ball.⁵⁵ These fathers make a grave mistake and a preventable one, and thus are in part at fault for what happens. Disney, conversely, sets up Maleficent as a wicked and horrible figure, introducing her with green haze, flashes of lightning and thunder and gasps of horror.⁵⁶ The animators use this imagery to show that the king was in the right to not invite her; she is a known wicked presence and it is not a slight against her that she was not invited but rather simply a recognition of her nature. Thus this king, unlike those before him, is correct to not invite her because her presence puts the lives of not only his family but also his entire kingdom in danger.

The important take away from Disney's alterations to this story is that they are making the father acceptable. The animators let this father live and be active throughout the entire story because he both recognizes his responsibilities, and is able to accomplish his duties. Whereas other fathers in previous versions vanish from the text after the daughter falls under the sleeping curse so that they can be replaced by the husband figure, this father does not. Aurora's father is present until the very end of the tale and welcomes her and Phillip into their happily ever after ending. Rather than being replaced or removed from the story, this father acts as the usher, welcoming Aurora into her new life. Fittingly for this ending is that before she goes to dance with Phillip in the closing moments of the movie, Aurora runs up and hugs her parents; the father,

⁵⁵ The reason he does not invite her is purposefully ridiculous- he runs out of place settings.

⁵⁶ Disney, *Sleeping Beauty*, 0:07:45

mother, and daughter embrace in a family hug showing that they are reunited and strong.⁵⁷ This father is a success both as a king and as a parent and thus is a strong enough to maintain both roles for the duration of the story. Disney presents this strong father for a reason though. Disney's *Sleeping Beauty* takes Perrault's story of curses, hundred year sleeps and wife-eating-ogres, and turns it into a movie which gives the message that no evil magic is too powerful to overcome the love of a family led by a strong father. The characters in this movie face all odds so that they can return to their families. Importantly, rather than being a story about marriage between the princess and her prince, this is a tale of the families so that marriage is returned to its proper place as a unifier of families.

As positive as this analysis sounds regarding Disney's adaptations, that they are working to restore the family and support conventional family values- that is not the full story. In both *Snow White* which was discussed above and *Cinderella* which will be discussed below, the Disney team immediately creates a fatherless story. In *Sleeping Beauty* they allow the father to remain and that is because there is no other alternative. This story backs the animators into a corner in which they cannot kill the father because he must remain alive until the curse is enacted.⁵⁸ Therefore, since Disney must keep this father figure around, they see no other option but to make him acceptable. However, holding strongly to Walt's patriarchal family values, it would have been unacceptable to

⁵⁷ Disney, *Sleeping Beauty*, 1:13:12

⁵⁸ As the tradition of this story shows, the father must grieve and at least attempt (even if only to fail) to make preparations after her sleep.

allow the father to fail at his duties. Walt Disney was a man who firmly believed in and internalized the family values instituted by the Hays Commission, and therefore would have insisted on a story that uplifted these values rather than a story which presented a successful character in spite of them.⁵⁹ Since the animators could not kill the father and maintain the integrity of the story and they could not leave him to fail because of Walt Disney's moral code, the animators did the only thing they could: make him acceptable. As opposed to the warnings of *Snow White* above and *Cinderella* below where the father who cannot be effective is removed, this story instead sends a positive message. Here, the father who is successful and strong is allowed not only to live, but also to see his daughter in her happy ending and to even be a part of that happy ending. This is showing the reward a father receives for fulfilling his duties. The progressions of these stories demonstrates the clear choice Disney has made in the way they portray families. They are willing to show a bad mother, a bad stepmother, and other wicked female figures as will be seen in *Cinderella*. However, the one thing contemporary storytelling through Disney does not allow for is the bad role model of a father. While there might be many motives for this, what is important is the consequence of it: fathers are made the idealized head of the family whose uncompromised image must be upheld even if at the expense of the good of the family or its other members; *Sleeping Beauty* is sent away from her home and her title as princess so that the father can be seen as protecting her.

⁵⁹ Bell, 1995, 7

III. CINDERELLA

The case of the “Cinderella” tales presents a father vastly different from those in the other princess fairy tales. Unlike “Snow White” where there is no father at all, this father is not only a named part of the story, but his distressing presence is also pervasive throughout. Unlike “Sleeping Beauty” where the father is present but, with the exception of Disney, ineffective, this father does not even try to fulfill his appointed fatherly duties. Instead, the traditional “Cinderella” father often begins as a loving father, but under the persuasion of a wicked woman, turns into a heartless character who, against all sense, actively tries to prevent his daughter from marrying the king or prince. These “Cinderella” fathers behave so badly that they can be seen as the antithesis of a proper parental role model, instead serving as a cautionary tale. Disney plays a role in connecting the different versions of these stories because unlike “Snow White,” the animators do not base “Cinderella” off the Grimms’ tales but rather off Perrault’s. Both Perrault and the Grimms had Basile’s tale in mind when writing, but the two storytellers took vastly different approaches to the father figure; the Grimms continued Basile’s tradition of a meddling father while Perrault wrote him mostly out of the tale. Disney then continues Perrault’s line of the tale by further eliminating the father from the story. In both archetypes, fathers with no bearing on the story as well as fathers who are present but serve to hurt the daughter, what is crucial is the way his failings are made up for. In “Cinderella,” this is through not simply magic, but

specifically feminine magic. The reason Disney used Perrault's work, rather than the Grimms stories, is because magic does not have to be as dominant when the father simply dies as when it must counteract the actions of a living father. Disney chooses the route in which they can best uphold the integrity of the father. One vital way in which they do that is by basing their tale off a model where, although the feminine magic is important, it is not in opposition to the father figure. It will be shown that in the Basile-Grimm tradition, feminine magic takes on a larger role specifically because the father is such a corrupt figure whereas in the Perrault-Disney tradition, magic takes on a less combative presence which makes it more applicable to a twentieth century American audience.

Before examining what differentiates the father figures of "Cinderella," it is imperative to look at what unites them. Each of the fathers faces the same basic flaw in that they do not have any further children. Every "Cinderella" father remarries and that he marries a wicked stepmother is fundamental to each story. However, once remarried, these father figures live out their lives with the daughter from their first marriage and the daughters from the stepmother's first marriage. The new couple does not have any children of their own; each story is careful to specify that the other daughters are from a previous marriage. For example, in Perrault's story, the narrative explains that the stepmother "could not bear the good qualities of this pretty girl, and

the less because they made her own daughters appear the more odious.”⁶⁰ Similarly, in the 1857 version of the Grimms’ story, it is said “this wife brought two daughters into the house with her.”⁶¹ On first glance, these quotes and their parallels in other tales demonstrate that the only children mentioned in the tales are either the father’s by his first wife or not biologically his. However, these and their context also show that the father has accepted as his own children who are not his and even worse placed them above his actual daughter in value and inheritance. It could be argued that the stepmother tricked him into this backwards hierarchy, but there is still something to be said for the agency of the father that he allowed this to happen. The stepmother, as wicked and manipulative as she is, is never said to trick him regarding who his children are; he does that all on his own. This problem brings up the topic of identity because the father is unable to identify who his legitimate and who his illegitimate daughters are. He confuses the groupings, believing his actual daughters to be those of his second wife’s former marriage so that the unwanted child becomes his own daughter from his first marriage. This pattern of improper naming is important in the amount of damage the father can do. Because of his skewed priorities, in stories where he plays a greater role he also is able to do more harm. His mistaken identity problem becomes a hindrance which magic must actively work to correct. However, in stories where he does not play a key role, this is not much of an issue at all because he does not have enough influence

⁶⁰ Perrault, “The Little Glass Slipper”

⁶¹ Grimm 1856, “Cinderella”

over the story to make it so. There are other problems presented by these two distinct classes of fathers, those who work against Cinderella and those who do nothing positive or negative, which help to understand further both the use of magic in the tale and the adaptations Disney makes so this argument will discuss the stories in those groupings.

The first grouping is that of Basile and the Grimms because these are the tales with a tradition of abominable fathers. These fathers, plagued by identification issues, have a strange desire to prevent their daughters from marrying the king or prince. In Basile's story, the father is so weak that both his third wife and his daughter are easily able to manipulate him. At the onset of the story, Zezolla convinces her father to marry her tutor and both because he loves his daughter and because he is weak, he consents. However, after the marriage this woman turns evil and poisons his heart against his daughter. This evil wife is so successful in manipulating her husband, or conversely her husband is so easily manipulated, that by the end of the story he is disgusted by the daughter he once dearly loved. At the end of the story, the King asks the father to bring all of his daughters, including Zezolla, to the feast. To this, the father replies that Zezolla is "worthless and a disgrace and does not deserve to sit at the place where you eat."⁶² This father has utterly lost sight of who his true daughter is and is left unable to identify her properly. It is not only his daughter whom he misidentifies, though, because his actions towards the king clearly show he has lost respect for monarchy. In telling the king who should and shouldn't be at his dinner table and even more than that, defying

⁶² Basile, "The Cat Cinderella"

the king's direct orders in order to tell him that, the father shows that there is no saving his dignity. As much as the father might think his daughter is "worthless," to throw away a chance at a royal marriage demonstrates just how deep his lapses in judgment run.⁶³ He is not simply a father who gets in the way of his daughter's marriage, he gets in the way of his own social status by attempting to prevent his daughter, and thus her entire family, from merging with the ruling family. If marriage is meant to be a union between two families, two political entities, then his actions are clearly a disservice to himself just as much as they are to Cinderella. Through these baffling actions, readers see that the hardship that befalls Cinderella is not her fault, but rather her fathers. By creating a father who acts so incoherently and who is obviously wrong, the writers eliminate from the readers' minds the possibility of Cinderella deserving her ill treatment. As will be shown, Cinderella demonstrates many qualities of a trickster, yet despite all of her manipulations she is still recognized as the heroine and the force of goodness because she is placed in direct opposition to the stupidity of her father. The recognition of the implications of these actions is necessary because the father's deeds show that Cinderella faces double persecution from both of her parents and thus the magic which aids her must be twice as strong and twice as effective in order to grant her success. The reach of the feminized fairy godmother powers in this story must supersede the

⁶³ This action is also important in clearing the name of Cinderella. Although she is said to be good and just, her father's treatment of her still works against this case. From the father's actions, readers are led to understand that the problem lies with his perspective, not with her or her actions.

torments of her entire family. Unlike the orphaned Cinderella's of other stories, this Cinderella still has a father but it is a father who hates her so the magic must overcome not only the bonds of an in-law family but also a biological family.

In terms of the father figure, the Grimms take up two very different traditions. In the original 1812 edition, there is no named father. Even in the beginning of the story when it discusses the events surrounding Cinderella's mother's death, it does not say that her father remarried. Rather, the story says that "The snow fell over the mother's grave like a white cloth; then after the sun had retired from it a second time, and the little tree had become green a second time, the man took another wife."⁶⁴ By calling this character a man and never specifically using the term father, the Grimms are separating him from any sort of fatherly responsibility. In this way "Cinderella" bears a remarkable resemblance to "Snow White." In both of these traditions, the earlier 1812 story has no mention of a father whatsoever. However, also in both of these traditions, the later 1857 version adds a named father character. This change is exemplary of the editing particularly Wilhelm Grimm did in his revisions of the stories. In the 1812 edition, the brothers set out to create a scholarly collection of fairy tales that would call together a united German heritage. Jack Zipes explains this intent when he argues that "The purpose of their collecting folk songs, tales, proverbs, legends, and documents was to write a history of old German *Poesie* and to demonstrate how *Kunstpoesie* (cultivated

⁶⁴ Grimms, 1812, "Cinderella"

literature) evolved out of traditional folk material.”⁶⁵ Zipes further claims that the brothers aimed to contribute to efforts towards Germanic unification by collecting a shared heritage through literature. He does this when he explains that “the brothers saw it as their task as literary historians to preserve the pure sources of modern German literature and to reveal the debt or connection of literate culture to the oral tradition.”⁶⁶ However, by the time the 1857 version was published this intent had drastically changed. At this time Wilhelm was the primary editor of the stories and he had the dedicated purpose of making them ready for a more child-aged audience.⁶⁷ In discussing the differences between the editing of Wilhelm and Jacob, particularly after 1815, Zipes explains that “Wilhelm did take more care to refine the style and make the contents of the tales more acceptable for a children’s audience- or, really, for adults who wanted the tales censored for children.”⁶⁸ In his pursuit to make these stories more child-appropriate, Wilhelm made the drastic change of adding a father both to “Snow White” and to “Cinderella.” These stories are different, however, in that the “Snow White” father makes only a very brief appearance. He marries the stepmother and then disappears from the text as has been shown above.

⁶⁵ Jack Zipes, Enchanted Forest, 10

⁶⁶ Jack Zipes, Enchanted Forest, 11

⁶⁷ Wilhelm faced many health challenges so while Jacob was able to be a more active, political face, Wilhelm remained back in a more editorial role. At the time Jacob was handling the larger project of a German dictionary, leaving the fairy tale collection primarily to Wilhelm. See Zipes, Enchanted Forest.

⁶⁸ Zipes, Enchanted Forest, 30

Conversely from the 1812 text, in the 1857 “Cinderella” story, the Grimms pick up on Basile’s tradition of a meddling, disloyal, weak father by creating a character who, at every turn, tries to thwart Cinderella’s attempts to return home after the ball. Wilhelm Grimm did not stop at simply adding a second parental figure, he also added an additional antagonist, another force which Cinderella and the magic aiding her must overcome. In this later tale, the iniquitous father is contrasted with the benevolence of the prince who will take his place as Cinderella’s male caretaker. Both these men share the same problem of an inability to properly identify who Cinderella is. The contrast between the father’s lack of ability and the prince’s inability to identify women is carried throughout the story as a tool to show the divide between righteousness and wickedness. In an almost comical twist, after Cinderella runs away from the ball each night, the prince asks her father if she is his daughter because she was spotted running towards his carriage or home.

The prince waited until her father came, and then he told him that the unknown girl had jumped into the pigeon coop. The old man thought, "Could it be Cinderella?" He had them bring him an ax and a pick so that he could break the pigeon coop apart, but no one was inside.⁶⁹

Neither character is able to identify her as his daughter but while the prince suffers from an honest lack of knowledge, the father refuses to accept her as his daughter. The characters are further differentiated because the birds aid the prince, who is a source of goodness in the tale, whereas the father, who is a point of conflict, receives no help.

⁶⁹ Grimms, 1856, Cinderella

This is demonstrated at the end of the tale. Both characters receive one last chance to properly identify Cinderella. The father's chance comes after both of the stepsisters have failed to fit into the slipper when the prince asks him if he has any other daughters. To this, the father responds that, "There is only a deformed little Cinderella from my first wife, but she cannot possibly be the bride."⁷⁰ Here he misidentifies her on two accounts: she not only is the bride but she also is his daughter. The prince, on the other hand, does not understand proper identity at first, but entirely due to the help of the pigeons, he is able to find and properly identify the right bride. If not for the birds who point out the bloody feet of the stepsisters, the prince would not have found Cinderella.⁷¹ Thanks to the intervention of the heavenly birds, "When she stood up the prince looked into her face, and he recognized the beautiful girl who had danced with him. He cried out, "She is my true bride."⁷² It is noteworthy here that Cinderella is also aided by the very same birds. In her case, they help her do chores and lighten her burden. There is a clear gender divide here between what men and women need assistance with. The male figures need help in leadership and vision whereas the women need help in domestic tasks. Applying this to the prince, he receives help and

⁷⁰ *ibid*

⁷¹ The sisters' feet are bloody because the stepmother has them each cut off either a toe or part of their heel to fit into the shoe. The birds call out to the prince to check the shoe and see that it is bloody because it does not actually fit the girl.

⁷² Grimms, 1856, "Cinderella" I call these heavenly birds because early in the story, when Cinderella's mother dies, the birds enter the story as a symbol of her mother's protective gaze from heaven. These are not average birds, but rather agents of her dead mother in heaven.

thus is able to uphold his manly duties, such as protecting and caring for the right woman.

As has been demonstrated, the father of the 1857 version plays a large role in the story. He has direct interaction with Cinderella in the way he tries to uncover her secret and with the monarchy in the way he tries to prevent the prince from marrying his daughter. This 1857 story harkens back to the earlier Basile tale in the tradition of a troublesome and unruly father who must be overcome. In these stories, the force which replaces him- magic- must overcome not only the wickedness of the stepfamily but also the damages caused by the father himself. The magic must be strong enough to protect Cinderella from all of these sources, thus giving magic a greater role in the story. While all Cinderella tales feature some amount of magic because it is what takes the place of the father to protect her, in these two stories it must be strong enough to overcome abuse from both parents rather than from just one. By comparison, Perrault's story does not require so much magic because the father figure is less present. As we will see, this lack of emphasis on the father is attractive to Disney and ultimately plays a large role in why they did not use the Grimms' story as the basis for their movie.

In Perrault's story, the father is present but just barely so. He appears in the beginning of the story to marry Cinderella's stepmother. However, the story does not give readers any insight into his character beyond that he exists. Readers know his role is a negative one because when the new wife torments Cinderella, as the narrative explains, "(she) bore it all patiently, and dared not tell her father, who would have

scolded her; for his wife governed him entirely.”⁷³ Yet these two snippets are all the story speaks of; this father only exists to marry and specifically to play a background role. This quote is the last readers hear of him so that the reader is unable to know if he dies or is simply in the background, ignoring the misery of his daughter. Whether he is alive and unaffected by the wrongs of his wife or he is dead, the consequence is the same in that he does nothing to restrain his wife or to protect his daughter. Therefore, this story presents a warning that fathers who refuse to do their jobs or deny their duty are essentially dead. While mothers were meant to take the lead in domestic affairs, it was still the father’s duty to teach children the ways of society and oversee the wife’s actions.⁷⁴ Oversight is the father’s responsibility and, as in this story, when he denies that responsibility, the family structure breaks down and the children suffer. However, there is an end to the suffering in this tale and that is because magic is introduced. Here, magic picks up the responsibility the father cast aside and is able to restore the family. In this story it is not only Cinderella who is graced with a better life, but also her stepsisters. Unlike other tales where the step-family is punished, in Perrault’s story, Cinderella forgives her sisters. The very last line of the tale says that Cinderella “gave her two sisters lodgings in the palace, and that very same day matched them with two great lords of the court.”⁷⁵ Therefore the tale ends not with Cinderella’s marriage but rather with the marriage of her stepsisters. Magic, although used by and directed in favor of

⁷³ Perrault, “The Little Glass Slipper”

⁷⁴ Pleck, 1992, 352

⁷⁵ Perrault, “The Little Glass Slipper”

Cinderella assists all the children in the tale, in part because all of them are without a ruling father figure. It is also noteworthy that in the absence of the father, Cinderella steps in not only to create a better future for herself, but also to do his specific task of finding marriages for her sisters.⁷⁶

Disney is specific in the opening credits to say that they based their story on Perrault's version of the tale.⁷⁷ Therefore if Perrault's tale is to say that a father who shirks his responsibility is essentially dead, Disney takes this message a step further by making the father character actually dead. The very first thing this story establishes is that the father was good, caring, and loving towards his daughter and that he died shortly after marrying the stepmother. However, unlike in *Snow White* where there simply isn't a father, Disney makes a specific point of showing how terrible the loss of this father was for Cinderella. In the opening montage of Cinderella's young life, the movie not only shows a scene of the father playing with his young daughter, but also shows how Cinderella ran to his deathbed weeping at his passing while her stepmother stands back smiling.⁷⁸ This scene goes far beyond a child's sadness at losing her father. This emotional moment of her sobbing over her father contrasted with the maniacal expression on the stepmother's face makes the viewer aware that had her father lived, she would have been cared for. However in his death she is left in the hands of an unfeeling, uncaring woman and is alone not only in her mourning but also in her entire

⁷⁶ This will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 2 on daughters & marriage

⁷⁷ Disney, *Cinderella*, 0:00:14

⁷⁸ Disney, *Cinderella*, 0:02:40

life. The death of this father demonstrates two important points about fathers within Disney animation. The first is that Disney specifically chose to model their story on the tradition of an absent father as opposed to a useless or evil father. They made a dynamic shift from using the Grimms' stories as they did with *Snow White* to using Perrault's story where there is a much less troubling father figure. The second point is that although magic comes to replace the father later in the movie, Disney has given Cinderella a childhood. The story does not jump from the father's remarriage to Cinderella's adulthood, but rather takes the time to show scenes from her youth. This makes the audience aware that although magic has entered the picture, Cinderella has still spent her entire childhood in servitude and facing ridicule. Both of these shifts are important because they create an unprecedented sympathy in the audience. Those watching Disney's *Cinderella* feel a deep pity for her suffering and are acutely aware that had the father lived, this fate would have been preventable. When magic steps in to fill his shoes and help her go to the ball, the audience feels relief that she is now being cared for, but until then there is a longing for the return of the father. Within the "Cinderella" tradition, this is a new concept. In the Basile and Grimms lineage, readers spend their interactions with the fathers wishing the fathers would go away. In Perrault's story, the reader condemns the father for not living up to his responsibilities and leaving so much of his own responsibility to his daughter. However, by eliminating the father before he turns into a despicable character, Disney manages to uplift this character into a position where the audience yearns for the foregone father. Similarly to

how Disney treated the father of *Snow White*, both of these fathers are uplifted as positive figures because of their deaths. Yet at the same time, both warn parents that they must be effective and diligent in their parenting or face the same tragic ending.

IV. FATHERS CONCLUSION

Throughout this discussion of fathers, there has been an assumption that magic steps in to fill the gaps left behind by unfitting fathers. However, this raises two essential points: why magic and how is it used? Magic is a distinctly fairy tale component and within the context of these stories is not remarkable. Fairy tales are meant to have elements of the mysterious and the impossible, so magic fits in with these themes. Nevertheless, these stories were not simply for enjoyment; they are also meant to be teaching instruments to their entire audience both children and adults. By replacing the father with a mystical element as opposed to a real world element, the stories say that there is nothing in real life that can truly replace the father. Magic is effective and does do the job well because each of the princesses ends up in a happy marriage and redeemed in her proper place as royalty. However, this magic does not exist outside of the fairy tale realm making this solution to the problem of missing fathers impossible to achieve in reality. This analysis would suggest that there is no real replacement for a missing father, and that in the literal world, rather than the literary world, families without a father break down and leave the children to both despair and mischief. However, this is not the full story because the magic does not generally act on

its own- it must be implemented by a living character. This brings up the second point of how magic is used. Magic is a very feminine force in these tales, but more than that it is generally enacted by the daughter figure for the purpose of marriage. Although there are fairy godmothers, the daughter figure always evokes the magical figure. This means that not only is the daughter figure calling upon the magical elements to help with her problems, but she is also taking responsibility for herself. Daughters summon magic to help them marry, to do the very thing the fathers most distinctly fail at. Therefore, in order to understand the relationship between the failings of the father and the outcomes of a happy marriage, the next chapter will focus on daughters and how daughters interact with the institution of marriage.

Chart 3. Daughters in Fairy Tales

Story	Cinderella	Sleeping Beauty	Snow White
Basile	<p>Zezenia has sway over her father to the extent that he marries at her behest. Zezenia plants & cares for the magic tree, which gives her beautiful clothes. Has the smarts to trick the King's servant so he can't follow her home. Once magic enters the story the father disappears.</p>	<p>Fairies and invisible forces take care of Talia once she wakes up. Talia defends herself to the queen saying her relationship with the King was not her fault because she was asleep. Talia sees the situation going badly and delays her death by tricking the queen and thus the King has time to save her.</p>	<p>Lisa is completely passive in this story. She accepts tremendous beatings without complaint. Rather than tell anyone who she is, she attempts to commit suicide, only being saved by the chance of her uncle overhearing her talking to a doll.</p>
Perrault	<p>Cinderella has an immense amount of initiative in this story- she suggest collecting rats for a coachman to her fairy godmother. Cinderella pulled out of her pocket the other slipper, and put it on her other foot"</p>	<p>Sleeping Beauty is not named in this story beyond "the princess." Curse is determined by time, not love; she wakes because the length of the curse ends. Although the story is in her name, she doesn't do much. She seems to do nothing of her own volition. Tale says that in the meanwhile (while Princess & prince are talking) the castle wakes up.</p>	
Grimm 1812	<p>Cinderella disobeys her stepmother's orders by getting magical assistance and then attending the ball. She continues to directly lie about her activity afterwards.</p>	<p>The story makes a point to say that at the very same moment Briar-Rose is kissed the whole castle wakes up giving her the specific power of waking everyone even though what actually broke the curse was time (not love). Her only action is to prick her finger and fall asleep.</p>	<p>Her beauty is so great it saves her life both from the huntsman and the dwarves who are nearly enchanted by it. SW is deceived three times by the "beautiful wares" her mother/step mother sells in disguise. When woken, SW goes in an instant from fear to love.</p>
Grimm 1857	<p>Cinderella talks to pigeons who tell her about the magic of the tree on her mother's grave</p>		
Disney	<p>Cinderella is helped completely by chance when her fairy godmother appears. Cinderella lies to her stepfamily about going to the ball. Cinderella herself produces the glass slipper when the original breaks.</p>	<p>Story focuses on her life before she falls under the curse rather than on external forces acting on her. She falls in love and although she doesn't refuse her father's marriage she protests it. Woken up by true love's kiss.</p>	<p>Snow White is a young child in earlier tales but at least a teenager in this story. Here again her beauty saves her from the huntsman. She is only deceived once by the queen & that is sufficient.</p>

Chart 4. Marriage in Fairy Tales

Story	Cinderella	Sleeping Beauty	Snow White
Basile	Father is able to marry evil teacher with no political motives, driven only by his daughter's desire. Zezolla immediately is placed on the throne when she is recognized	King who impregnates Talia is already married but falls in love with her. The wife suspects his infidelity and tries to get retribution by attempting to feed him his children. King throws wife into the fire upon learning of her deceit. <i>No marriages begin in this story, it does not end with the marriage of Talia.</i>	She does not have an actual father so there is no parental marriage. Marriage plays a very small role and is only mentioned in the end of the story when the uncle casts out his own wife for her evils and gives Lisa "a handsome husband of her own choosing"
Perrault	Father marries for no apparent reason, especially because his wife is evil & already has children. Immediately marries Cinderella after identity revealed because of beauty & grace- not power.	Prince will not marry S.B. until his father dies and he "saw himself lord & master." Still subject to threat of his ogre-mother. Moral of the story praises S.B. for waiting 100 years for marriage yet acknowledges the desire of the young to marry quickly.	
Grimm 1812	Father marries for no apparent reason. Festival is specifically so the son could find a wife (within the country, not royalty). Prince marries because of his love for beautiful Cinderella.	Marriage plays a very small role in this story. The only mention of it is in the very last sentence where it says, "prince and Brier-Rose got married, and they lived long and happily until they died."	Prince reads inscription & knows she is a princess. Prince does not wake her, a servant does, marries her the next day.
Grimm 1857			Stepmother, not mother. Direct discourse between Prince & Snow White.
Disney	Married for the benefit of his daughter, so she would have a mother again. Ball is held specifically so Prince can find a wife. Prince marries for love.	Marriage plays an enormous role in this movie. It is one of the major sources of conflict and discussion. Aurora & the Prince are engaged in their youth and their fathers fight over it as they come of age. The marriage is both political and for love making it a happy ending for everyone.	Snow White never explicitly marries the prince, she simply rides off into the sunset with him.

CHAPTER TWO: DAUGHTERS AND MARRIAGE

The discussion of father figures culminated in showing that, for various reasons, all of these father figures fail in their essential duties. The primary way in which they are unsuccessful is in setting up marriages for their daughters. With fathers remiss in their marital duties, the burden falls to daughters to do what their fathers could or would not. Throughout these stories, daughters demonstrate their capacity and cunning in obtaining for themselves and even for their sisters the very thing which their father failed at. It is through the institution of marriage, therefore, that daughters gain autonomy and power, that they take control over their own lives and futures, often against the current of their own societies. Despite working within a patriarchal system, these daughters become powerful figures who clash with social norms by stepping into the role of the father to design a life for themselves. Even more remarkable, these daughters undertake royal marriages, sometimes, as in the case of "Cinderella," stepping well beyond their class and almost always while going directly against the rule and order of an authority figure to do so.

However, in order to go against established rule, daughters must work within the patriarchal framework of society. This is where marriage becomes an integral part of the discussion. Daughters are able to take control of their narratives by using marriage as a tool. As the analysis moves through the chronology of these tales, there is a general pattern of marriage becoming less and less important because the focus of the stories

shifts from life after the title character's marriage to life before her marriage. In conjunction with the changing marriage of the daughter, readers also see changes among the marriages of father characters. A discussion of both the marriage of the daughter and the father is important because they work in direct contrast. Where the daughter's marriage is always a positive element, usually a reward for her patience, grace, or even for her gumption, the father's marriage is usually a precursor for the suffering that is about to come. These marriages are often the only characterization of the father that readers are presented with, displaying a consuming marriage and a twisted gender role. Where the daughters gain power through their marriages, the fathers lose their authority through their marriages.

The daughters do not accomplish these marriages without help; each of these daughters obtains their goals by using some form of magic. This can be active, as with "Cinderella" where the protagonist seeks out magic for the purpose of improving her life, or passive as with "Snow White" where her inherent beauty, given to her by magic, is the tool she is able to rely on to meet her ends. Rather than looking at magic as another dominating force, this chapter will show that it is in fact the means through which daughters gain the ability to rise above their gender and social status in order to create better lives for themselves. Magic and marriage are not cages for these daughters, but rather the way to freedom out of the cruel rule of their wicked mothers or from terrible curses. Thus through these marriages daughters distinguish themselves and are made, within the bounds of strict patriarchy, the heroines of their tales.

The following analysis will cover both the ways in which marriage and the ways in which daughters are discussed through each of the stories. The first priority will be to contrast the failing marriages of the father with the successful marriages of the daughter to demonstrate the effects of lacking a strong male figure. The second priority will be to understand how the marriage of the daughter, as well as other plot points, contribute to the sovereignty of the daughter characters. This analysis will again follow the progression of weakest to strongest fathers to demonstrate the evolution of marriage as the father character becomes stronger and more dangerous.

I. SNOW WHITE

“Snow White” stories are united across the tales by a lack of maternal marriage and literally enchanting beauty. As shown earlier, of all the “Snow White” tales under examination- one by Basile, two by the Grimms, and one by Disney- there is only a named father figure in the 1856 Grimms story. Because of this, there is only one parental marriage; yet the change to create a named father figure is done almost exclusively as a means of introducing the wicked stepmother. In the other tales, this stepmother figure is usually just simply there in the story with no explanation or mention of the father or the previous mother. The lack of expressed marriage in these stories serves to diminish the importance of both the figures and of the institution of marriage. The stepmother, whether or not there was a father who married her, is still the legitimate authority over Snow White and over the kingdom. Although by reason of

logic, to be a stepmother she must have married the King, in eliminating that element from the story, the writers show that marriage is not actually the focal point here.⁷⁹ This de-emphasis shifts focus away from marriage throughout the tale so that readers see the protagonist not as a wife or future wife, but rather as a daughter and a child instead. It makes Snow White a more youthful figure, which enhances her innocent qualities. This shift also means that, while it is Snow White's responsibility to find her own marriage and that is a central theme, her suffering becomes equally important. Because she is a child, because marriage is not the defining characteristic of these characters' identities, readers can see her actions and her magic as less about finding a mate or lover and more about self-protection. The use of magic to guard Snow White is another binding element among these tales. Although she does not specifically use magic in most of the stories, her beauty is so great that it keeps her safe. It is important to note here that this is not a natural beauty. Before Disney, each of the tales featured a magical, fairy element surrounding her birth. Especially in the post-Basile tradition, Snow White characters specifically spend time unprotected in the woods, living with seven men and falling under a sleeping curse. Without a father to protect her, her fairy-given beauty becomes the saving element that keeps her safe from harm or abuse. These two trends of parental marriage and mystical beauty play out with distinct

⁷⁹ I make this assessment because in other tales these very same authors do specify marriage. In "Cinderella," for example, they use specific terms to say that the father remarried, even when that is the only mention of the father in the tale. Therefore, it must have been a conscious choice to not do the same here but instead leave the stepmother figure alone as the only authority.

variations in each of the tales and by going through the stories chronologically, it will be clear that Snow White becomes a progressively stronger and more authoritative character.

Basile's "The Young Slave" depicts marriage as both a punishment and a reward. There are two marriages in this story, that of Lisa's uncle, the Baron of Selvascura, and his wife, as well as at the very end Lisa's own marriage. The first, the union of the adults, constitutes the marriage that is a punishment because in the story the Baron uses his rights as a husband to send away his wife for her wickedness. His wife, Lisa's aunt, spends the duration of her time in the story vilely abusing, beating, and harassing Lisa out of jealousy over Lisa's beauty and chastity. When the Baron finds out what she has done, he sends her back to her family, out of his household, and returns her back into the child-like state of dependence on her parents. The Baron is one of the few positive father figures we see despite being flawed with lacking children of his own. A reader must question whether his wife's greater crime was mistreating his niece or if it was not producing an heir (and subsequently mistreating the only candidate to be his heir). An interesting and telling moment is that the second to last line of the story informs readers of the fate of both the malicious wife and of Lisa. The tale concludes by saying that the baron "drove his wife away, sending her back to her parents, and gave his niece a handsome husband of her own choice."⁸⁰ This transitions readers from the failed marriage of the aunt to the successful marriage of Lisa. At the same time, it

⁸⁰ Basile, "The Young Slave"

demonstrates how power is both bestowed and taken away through the institution of marriage. The aunt, who used her authority for wickedness, was stripped of her independence (from her father) as a punishment because she misused her marital status. Lisa, conversely, is granted power and autonomy by being allowed to choose her own husband. Although a dominated character through the story who is broken down by beatings and torture, she eventually regains status and happiness by being granted the unusual ability to choose her own husband. While this is a positive reading of the outcome of the story, that the Snow White character gains authority and respect, it cannot be ignored that this is the end of the story. In order to get to this point, the character must suffer immensely and is on the verge of suicide before her uncle steps in to bestow these graces on her. While the story ends with a strong female protagonist, along the way, in the absence of a father to give her protection, she is relegated to being a slave. The fate of Snow White in the Grimms' story, as will be shown, is somewhat better because she is merely a servant, and does not face the same abuses.

The Grimms' version of Snow White, as has been said, is one of the instances where there is a significant difference between the earlier and later editions of the tale and this change comes through the institution of marriage. Before discussing the marriage of Snow White, therefore, it is important to look at the marriage or lack of marriage among her parents and the way that influences her distinct control over her future. In the 1812 story, the only parent mentioned is Snow White's mother. This mother is said to have wished "If only I had a child as white as snow, as red as blood,

and as black as this frame.”⁸¹ The story says that soon afterwards she had a daughter with those qualities. There is no husband involved and no king apparent, only a queen overtaken with vanity. The lack of a parental marriage allows the queen’s jealousy to go unchecked throughout the tale so that she takes vengeance on her child for being precisely as beautiful as she, the queen, wished for her daughter to be. The 1856 story takes a much different approach to marriage. In this later story, while there is no mention of the father in how she had the child, there is a small reference to him being in existence. The text says that “And as soon as the child was born, the queen died. A year later the king took himself another wife.”⁸² Whereas in the 1812 edition, readers could have taken it to be a magical impregnation, here, because there is a directly named male counterpart to the queen, this becomes unlikely. The shift from a single queen to a queen, king, and new queen is vital for understanding how to perceive the actions of the king. As discussed earlier, this king is a failure because, since readers know him to exist, readers also know he cannot or refuses to limit the powers of his new wife. His authority is corrupted by her vanity and he fails not only in protecting his daughter, but also in protecting his country. Now, under the context of marriage, this failing can be taken a step further. The father is identified only through his marriage; he exists only insofar as to marry the new queen and not to do any of his monarchical functions like ruling, administering justice, or protecting his people. Further, this shows his character to have

⁸¹ Grimms, 1812, “Little Snow White”

⁸² Grimms, 1856, “ Little Snow White”

two roles. The first role is as a king because the texts refer to him as such; the second role is as a husband because marriage is the only action he takes. He is not specified to be a father and indeed does not act as a father, therefore failing not only in his named duties, but also in even recognizing the extent of his responsibilities.⁸³ By denying his responsibility as a father, the burden of both protecting Snow White and finding her a husband falls onto her shoulders. This is a component common to both editions of the story. Snow White is not alone in bearing these burdens, however, because she has magic to assist her. Specifically, in this case she has the magic of her beauty. Because of the introduction where her mother's wishes for a specific daughter are granted, readers are led to assume that this is no natural birth, but rather one orchestrated by magical elements. Therefore, the beauty bestowed on the child can be considered to have magical, enchanting qualities. Although Snow White may not be actively aware of the paranormal capacity of her beauty, it works to her advantage throughout the story. For example, when she is brought into the forest to be killed by the huntsman, in both stories it is neither kindness nor pity that saves her, but rather her beauty. The 1856 story says that, "Because she was so beautiful the huntsman took pity on her, and he said, 'Run away, you poor child.' He thought, 'The wild animals will soon devour you

⁸³ Scholars have speculated as to whether he appears in other functions. Maria Tatar, for instance, explains that a common approach to this story is to argue that the father appears as the huntsman in the woods or that he becomes the face in the mirror, constantly judging his wife's beauty. I believe this reads too much into the character and that there is no evidence for this reading. The story does not say he transforms, dies, or does anything other than marrying. For more reading on this see The Hard Facts of the Grimms' Fairy Tales, page 154.

anyway,' but still it was as if a stone had fallen from his heart, for he would not have to kill her."⁸⁴ In this selection, the text says that it is because of her mysteriously-wished-for-and-granted beauty, that she is allowed to live. This magical beauty takes the place of a father or protector so that instead it is a quality within herself that saves her. Although in a passive manner, Snow White is able to save herself through her own appearance and beauty. This theme continues with the dwarves as well as with the prince where it is her astonishing and magical beauty that keeps her from harm. Therefore, readers can see that throughout the entire story, Snow White is able to save and protect herself. She does not have a life free of concern because she still must contend with her mother/stepmother and must act as a servant for the dwarves. Regardless, she has the power to create a better life for herself through the aid of magic and does so.

Snow White's marriage in this version presents an exemplary instance of how her beauty not only protects her but also helps her to create a better future. In this story, after she falls under the sleeping curse, the dwarves believe she is dead since she lacks all signs of life. However, the dwarves are observant and after three days of mourning "They were going to bury her, but they saw that she remained fresh. She did not look at all like a dead person, and she still had beautiful red cheeks."⁸⁵ This shows readers that she was not dead but in a transitional phase that prevented her from either

⁸⁴ Grimms, 1856, "Little Snow White"

⁸⁵ Grimms, 1812, "Little Snow White"

living or dying. What is meaningful in this passage is that, as astounding as her lack of decay after three days was, what the dwarves noticed was not a lack of putrefaction, but rather that her cheeks remained beautifully colored. Her beauty kept her from being buried in this liminal state between life and death. Instead, the dwarves store her body in a glass coffin where they can continue to gaze upon her beauty. The text is specific to say that they made the coffin glass “so that she could be seen easily,” which reinforces that it was her beauty which preserved her.⁸⁶ The text continues to explain that “They wrote her name and her ancestry on it in gold letters.”⁸⁷ This becomes important because when the prince comes to their home seeking shelter and sees Snow White, he is taken not only because of her enchanting beauty but also because she is a princess. He offers to purchase her body from the dwarves because “he could not get enough of her beauty. He read the golden inscription and saw that she was the daughter of a king.”⁸⁸ As much as her enchanting beauty made up for the lack of a father to protect her, in this story even that was not enough. At least a part of the reason the Prince falls in love with her is because she is identified as a princess. This moment also proves an important point about what a good marriage does. Snow White began as a princess but was cast out from her home and her title by her wicked stepmother. Through marrying the prince, she regains the title she lost. She again becomes a princess and in line to become a queen. The link between marriage and individuality here is that through her

⁸⁶ Grimms, 1812, “ Little Snow White”

⁸⁷ *ibid*

⁸⁸ *ibid*

magic, she is able to keep herself protected from death and through her marriage she is able to secure the position of power which is rightfully hers. While it is true that she does not actively orchestrate anything in this story, what is also true is that these elements that give her a happy future are innate within her; both her beauty and her royal status as princess. Those elements were not stripped by cruelty, shunning, or a lack of father but rather confirmed when the prince first encountered her.

The Disney version of this tale picks up on the powers of beauty and marriage just discussed but with an adaptation: in their tale, Snow White has individual desires—specifically to marry the prince. The resulting marriage, which comes to pass again because of her innate qualities, is the very marriage she wanted from the start of the movie. However, before examining the way in which Disney’s Snow White attains her happy ending, it is important to first look at the lack of marriage with her parents. As discussed earlier, there is no father in this story whatsoever. The story begins with Snow White’s jealous and incredibly vain stepmother and with absolutely no mention of the father who married her or the parents who bore Snow White. The very first lines of the movie are told through a narrator. This narrator says, “Once upon a time there lived a lovely princess named Snow White. Her vain and wicked stepmother the queen feared that one day Snow White’s beauty would surpass her own.”⁸⁹ Therefore, the story immediately transitions from Snow White to her stepmother’s faults without a marriage in between. This plotline sets up a devaluation of marriage throughout the tale so that

⁸⁹ Disney, *Snow White*, 0:02:03

by the end of the story, the “happy ending” does not include marriage. Unlike the Grimms who insert a brief father figure to set up the introduction of the stepmother, Disney omits both the father and the marriage. The lack of a father or marriage foretells the ending of the tale which shows Snow White and the prince heading off into the sunset where his glowing castle shines. However, this ending does not say they get married or have any expressed intent to. Snow White wakes up to be swept off her feet, placed on a horse, say her goodbyes and parades off to the Prince’s castle. This includes neither a proposal nor a marriage.⁹⁰ It is not a coincidence that in the story with the weakest father figure, the audience also sees the weakest representation of marriage. Since marriage was demonstrated earlier to be one of the primary responsibilities of the father if not his greatest duty, it is important that both he and marriage are absent from this tale. Without a father there to orchestrate or at the very least to approve the marriage, the actual marriage does not happen; the marriage Snow White orchestrates is implicit but not played out in part because there was no father to approve it. At the same time, however, the lack of marriage does not hinder the daughter figure. Without a father there to teach her the rules of society or aid in her upbringing, she does not learn proper social behavior, and therefore is completely free to cohabit with the seven dwarves. What is different about the way this Snow White lives with the dwarves’

⁹⁰ Disney, *Snow White*, 1:22:00

from the Grimms is the deep emotional attachment she builds with them.⁹¹ No Snow White figure creates this bond as clearly as Disney's because she not only cooks and cleans, she takes care of the dwarves emotional well-being by becoming a house mother for them. Without marriage or a father to teach her, this Snow White approximates the best version of a family that she can and builds for herself a peaceful life in the woods. That this life is ended by her romantic ride off into the sunset with Prince Charming does not take away from the life she built, but rather shows that on her own she can create a peaceful life, but with the aid of a magical kiss and her enchanting beauty, she can regain her princess status and rightful place in line for the throne. Snow White, in this version, plays the roles of daughter, servant, pseudo-mother and love interest, but, importantly, never wife. Without a father to actually ordain the marriage, the ceremony never takes place. It is implied but because the ceremony is never played out; this demonstrates the importance of a father because it is only with his approval that the actual marriage can be carried through. As stated earlier, this patriarchal system does not function without a father, and this element of the "Snow White" story further illustrates that it is a warning and not a critique. If it were a critique then there would be alternatives presented and there would be a way to work around his absence; Snow White would be married through alternate means. However, without those subversions to the patriarchal system, Snow White is left in the cycle of perpetually being on the

⁹¹ For more on the necessity of female fairy tale characters to prove their femininity through domestic chores see Maria Tatar's work The Hard Facts of the Grimms' Fairy Tales, particularly the discussion on page 116.

clasp of marriage. While she has agency to create and set up this union, in the absence of a father she is unable to fulfill the promise. It is a warning that even the most cunning and capable daughter cannot be entirely successful without a father.

II. SLEEPING BEAUTY

The stories of “Sleeping Beauty” are an excellent example of why the chronology of the tales matters. In this set of stories, as the narrative moves through history to focus less on Sleeping Beauty’s life after marriage towards focusing on her life before marriage, it also reveals more about her wishes, desires and abilities. It is not only through her actions that this becomes apparent, but also through the way the writers handle her character. The tales begin with Basile who gives her no direct speech in the entire story and narrates her actions and words through other characters. However, by the time the story reaches the pencils of Disney animators, she is given the spotlight; she has ample discourse, songs, even dreams of her future.

While Sleeping Beauty’s marriage plays an important part in the plot of many of the versions of this story, the marriage of her father is nonexistent. “Sleeping Beauty” is the only one of the stories analyzed here that does not feature the remarriage of the father. The progression of the husband and wife relationships is also a fruitful discussion because as readers go chronologically through the tales, the mother begins to emerge out of the shadow of the father’s authority. Considering the increasing focus on Sleeping Beauty’s pre-marital life in conjunction with a greater development of her family,

readers can see that as *Sleeping Beauty* becomes a more active presence in the story, so too does her family. As the stories progress, the focus on the prince's family will diminish until it is nearly nonexistent, and the princess' family will take their place, thereby transforming this into a story not about the saving graces of marriage, but rather, especially for the final Disney story, about the importance of and strength that comes from a strong family.

In the earlier discussion of fathers, Basile's father character in "Sun, Moon, and Talia," was argued to be the weakest because it is through his inability to cope with his daughter's sleep that he abandons her and leaves her to be raped by a foreign king. Through his lack of marriage in the tale, the weakness of his character is demonstrated further. The story begins by saying that "There once lived a great lord, who was blessed with the birth of a daughter, whom he named Talia."⁹² The story continues from this point to discuss the actions he took to learn of his daughter's future, how much he loved his daughter, and how he attempts to prevent the curse. Nowhere in the narrative is there a mention of her mother or how he was blessed with this daughter. The lack of a mother shows that this is an incomplete family. For Basile, the lack of a parent is not uncommon. In both "Sun, Moon, and Talia" and "The Young Slave," there is one parent completely missing. In the *Sleeping Beauty* narrative the father was "blessed" with a daughter and in the *Snow White* narrative the mother is impregnated by a rosebush. However, the key difference here is that in *Snow White*, the lack of a father is replaced

⁹² Basile, "Sun, Moon, and Talia"

by the end of the tale with the uncle figure. In this story, however, Talia is not given a replacement for her mother and thus is abandoned completely. Because there is no replacement for the mother and the father gives up on her, Talia must rely on marriage and magic to care for her. This is problematic because it is one of only two stories in which the protagonist's life is directly endangered for lack of a protective figure.⁹³ Talia's marriage does not come until the very last line of the story where it says that the king "married Talia to wife; and she enjoyed a long life with her husband and her children."⁹⁴

The great lapse of time between leaving her father's protection and entering the protection of her husband leaves Talia and her children vulnerable to the wrath of the king's malicious wife. Following the previous pattern, this should be an opportunity for Talia to gain more power, yet here that is not the case. Rather than use this divide to focus on the title character, Basile rather focuses almost exclusively on the relationship between the king and his first wife. Talia is shown to be an unimportant figure for the majority of the story except as the cause of the marital problems between the king and queen, and as the source of the queen's vexation. Marriage, therefore, becomes important in that it prevents Talia and her lover from being together. When the protagonist is not the one being married, marriage becomes an antagonistic force. However, when this character is the one being married, as she and the king are at the very end, it is a positive means of restoring the princess Talia to her rightful place on the

⁹³ The other tale is Perrault's version of "Sleeping Beauty"

⁹⁴ Basile, "Sun, Moon, and Talia"

throne. This story uses marriage to point out the divergence between a dreadful and a good marriage is based on the way that the wives use it. It is not because marriage is bad or evil that it is so problematic for the King and his wife, but rather because his wife herself is evil. Once a benevolent character, like Talia, uses marriage, it loses these negative connotations. Therefore, marriage can be seen as a neutral event, as having neither a positive nor negative effect on the characters, because it is actually the actions of the wives involved that ultimately define the marriage's impact.

While Basile placed most of his "Sleeping Beauty" story after Talia wakes from the curse, Perrault makes a significant alteration to the focus of the plot by dividing his story evenly before and after the curse. In Perrault's story, most of the pre-curse narrative is focused on the celebrations of Sleeping Beauty's birth while most of the narrative after she wakes is focused, again, on the evil female figure. In this case this figure is the prince's part-ogre mother. Perrault upholds Basile's idea here of an evil woman who tries to cook Sleeping Beauty and her children but changes the motives. Instead of a wife feeding the bastard children of her husband and his mistress to her husband, Perrault creates a part-ogre mother who wants to cook and eat the children herself. This shift changes the focus of the story from the differences of a good and bad marriage to a greater emphasis on the importance of a strong family. The story begins with showing the weakness of Sleeping Beauty's family, particularly in the father's acceptance of the curse. As was shown in Chapter One, his mistakes, particularly in the way he offends a fairy, are the cause of the curse. Yet he is later shown to passively

accept his daughter's cursed slumber. Despite initial action to prevent the curse, the father comes to accept its inevitability. Once she falls under the curse, the narrator explains that "And now the king, who came up at the noise, bethought himself of the prediction of the fairies, and, judging very well that this must necessarily come to pass, since the fairies had said it."⁹⁵ This father has given up protecting his daughter, a theme which is continued by the father of the prince as well. While the prince's father rules, the part-ogre queen lacks the oversight and restraint necessary to keep her from eating children and the prince is unable to gain enough authority to overcome his mother. Thus, the prince keeps this new family secret for two years until his father dies and he gains the monarchical authority to control his mother. The text explains, "when the king was dead, which happened about two years afterward, and he saw himself lord and master, he openly declared his marriage."⁹⁶ Since the prince could not rely on his father to protect his wife and children, he had to wait until he had the opportunity to do so himself. Although he does not have full control over his mother, as she does try to eat the children and his wife, he ultimately prevails over her because he catches her just before she is about to eat his wife and children, leading her to commit suicide instead. Further, it is vital to recognize that this story differs from every other story in the "Sleeping Beauty" tradition as well as from all the stories studied here in that it does not end with the marriage or potential marriage of the protagonist, but rather much later.

⁹⁵ Perrault, "The Sleeping Beauty in the Woods"

⁹⁶ Perrault, "The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood"

This story does not end until the ogre-mother dies. Keeping in mind both that both fathers in this story fail to protect their children and that the story does not end with a focus on marriage, but rather with a focus on the rise to power of the prince, it is clear that marriage is not the dominating force in this story. Rather, family is. The story cannot have a happy ending until Sleeping Beauty's family is strong enough to garner the protection she requires, and marriage is not influential enough to do that. This story not only creates a more even focus between the fall of the father and rise of the prince, but also explores the qualities a male caretaker must have in order to sufficiently protect his family. Being a husband isn't enough; he must be a father in the sense of protecting and enforcing order as well. By the end of the story, through his defeat of his mother, the prince proves he can do this.

The role of the Sleeping Beauty character is inconsistent in this story, which is explainable through the lack of a stable protective force. Unlike other princesses who have explicit magical aids, this princess has no such help. On the one hand, she is given more influence in the text than in the previous version because she does have direct speech. In this story she speaks twice; the first time is to interact with the woman spinning just before pricking her finger, and the second is to express her deep love for her children. On the other hand, while Basile's Talia was able to use cunning to save her own life, this Sleeping Beauty is only saved by the kindness of the cook.⁹⁷ Further, this

⁹⁷ In Basile's story, the wife tries to kill Talia by boiling her alive. However, Talia comes up with a way to stall her death: she asks if she can take her jewel-encrusted clothes off

Sleeping Beauty is never granted a name. While some fairy tales give their princesses a specific name like Talia or Brier Rose within the "Sleeping Beauty" tradition, this story identifies her simply as princess. This serves to silence her and make her reliant on her relationships, rather than on her own strength or cleverness. Therefore she becomes more important as a figure but also less powerful because her personal story matters less. However, while she may be weak in her defense of herself, she is not weak as a mother. Within the traditions of "Snow White," "Sleeping Beauty," and "Cinderella," only two characters are mothers: Basile's Talia and Perrault's Sleeping Beauty. In Basile's story, Talia works to defend herself but does not ask about her children and does not even show concern that her children had been taken away from her. Conversely, Perrault's princess, when faced with death, does not fight it but rather says "Do it; do it" (said she, stretching out her neck). 'Execute your orders, and then I shall go and see my children, my poor children, whom I so much and so tenderly loved.'⁹⁸ Believing her children to be dead, she wishes only to see them, and does not care for her own life. This is important because although she is prevented from having strength to save herself, she is given strength by being an exemplary role model of a mother.

The Grimms take a radically different approach to this story by completely removing Sleeping Beauty's marital life from the story. In doing this they continue the

to preserve them. The wife consents and between removing every piece of clothing Talia screams, which finally attracts the attention of the King who is then able to save her.

⁹⁸ Perrault, "The Sleeping Beauty in the Woods"

trend of downplaying her life after marriage and instead focusing on her life before she becomes a wife. In both the 1812 and 1856 versions of this story, the texts close with the line “And then the prince's marriage to Little Brier-Rose was celebrated with great splendor, and they lived happily until they died.”⁹⁹ From this, readers are told that her entire life post-marriage was pleasant, happy, and trouble free, much different from the life of Sleeping Beauty characters before. This moment shows that marriage is not the point of this story while at the same time romanticizing marriage as what happens after all of the hardships in life have been resolved. Marriage is the reward for the happy couple after triumphing over the curse. This shift also means that the majority of the story is focused on her father before she fell under the curse. While still recognizing the role of the prince, the story manages to pull focus towards the father and his ineptitude for protecting his daughter or his kingdom. This shift is important because it places the emphasis of the story on the family and Brier-Rose’s role as a daughter, not as a wife.

Although Brier-Rose does not play as large of a role within this story as her male counterpart the prince, let alone her father, she does have more influence than in earlier versions. Again she only has two lines, only this time they are within the same scene and both are related to how she falls under the curse.

"Good day, old woman," said the princess. "What are you doing there?"
 "I am spinning," said the old woman, nodding her head.
 "What is that thing that is so merrily bouncing about?" asked the girl,
 taking hold of the spindle, for she too wanted to spin."¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ Grimms, 1856, “Little Brier-Rose”

¹⁰⁰ Grimms, 1856 “Little Brier Rose”

What is different here is that this is the only time when she speaks within the story. Her actions, like those of all of the characters, are told through the narrator so that, in terms of speech, she is given just as much of a voice as the male characters. She actually has more speech than any other character. In the entire story there are only eight cases of direct speech: one by a frog who predicts her birth, one by her parents who together exclaim their desire for a child, one by the fairy who curses her, one by the fairy who lightens the curse, one by the woman spinning flax, and one by the prince. Although her voice is small, it is still greater than that of all the other characters, making her individually and personally more important. This is a colossal change from the Sleeping Beauty character in Perrault's story who was nameless and from Basile's, who was speechless. What is meaningful about this change is that it is not done by increasing her role, but rather by decreasing the roles of everyone around her. Her father does not speak independently at all where he previously had a great role in the beginning of the story. The same is true of the fairies. The prince, who held half or more of the direct speech in previous tales, is relegated to only one line as well. The impact this change has is that it empowers her and makes her more important than she would otherwise seem to be. While it is time that wakes her, her active role within the story and within the enactment of the curse makes all of the other characters dependent upon her fate. This point is further proven by the way in which the entire castle immediately falls asleep along with her, rather than as a later action taken by the fairies.

Before discussing the role of Brier-Rose in Disney's story, it is important to examine the concept of love. One of the biggest changes Disney makes is the use of love as the cure for the sleeping curse. In Perrault's and the Grimms' stories, the sleeping curse was based on time. The princess was meant to sleep for one hundred year period. There is no mention of princes or love; the prince that finds her always just happens to be there at the exact right moment. In stories like the Grimms and Perrault, the authors are explicit to say that for the duration of that hundred years other princes have tried and failed to reach the castle. They die entwined in the trees raised by the fairy to protect the castle. Perrault talks of this in his story when he writes that "And now, as the enchantment was at an end, the princess awakened."¹⁰¹ The Grimms continue this tradition when they write, "The prince was so amazed at her beauty that he bent over and kissed her. At that moment she awoke" and at that exact moment the kiss ended.¹⁰² The prince's kiss was not what ended the sleeping curse, rather, it was the progression of time and the prince simply had perfect timing. In Basile's story, it was neither time nor love that woke her but rather a complete accident.¹⁰³ Disney, already famous at this time for the true love's kiss that woke Snow White, upholds the magical approach to love in *Sleeping Beauty*. In this movie, Aurora's sleep, although it is not specifically

¹⁰¹ Perrault, "The Sleeping Beauty in the Woods"

¹⁰² Grimms, 1856 "Little Brier-Rose"

¹⁰³ In this story, Talia becomes pregnant from her encounter with the King. Nine months later she gives birth twins. As newborns looking to suckle, one of them accidentally attaches to her finger instead of her breast and sucks out the poisoned piece of flax which had caused her sleep.

stated, seems to have been for less than a day. Once she falls under the curse, the fairies put everyone to sleep but realize Phillip is her true love. Moments later the fairies also realize the prince has been taken hostage by Maleficent, after which a brief battle ensues. He defeats Maleficent and the fairies whisk him away, back to Aurora's side. Although the medium of film contributes to the speed with which she is woken is, the reason for the brevity of this scene lies beyond the use of film because the animators could have made time pass if that was their desired intent.¹⁰⁴ The entire movie is seventy-five minutes long, yet she does not prick her finger until the timestamp 51:12 and she is woken up at 1:11:34. This refiguring of the timing allows Disney to spend the significant majority of the movie developing Aurora's character. Although the duration of the curse occurs over the span of one day, moving the finger prick to near the end of the movie allows the animators to give her a significant and direct voice so that the audience clearly sees her as the major character. While others like the father, prince and fairies remain important, this is the first and only version in which the title character plays the largest role. Her character has evolved over the course of the history of this story from a figure without any direct speech to being the focal point of the entire tale. This change is significant because it means that she is given power within the story. Aurora thus becomes an active contender in her own fate. While viewers cannot know if she would have been allowed to make her own marital choices, she does make the

¹⁰⁴ Just as they were able to skip from her christening to her sixteenth birthday, if the animators had wanted time to pass while Phillip sat trapped in a jail cell they easily could have done so, therefore that they didn't is worthy of discussion.

choice to fall in love. Unlike every Sleeping Beauty before her, she decides who she loves before she falls under the curse, rather than being bound to the man who wakes her. This choice is powerful, and even hints at having the ability to make changes. On the eve of her birthday, the fairies who love her go as far as to discuss if she might be able to marry the boy she loves instead of the foreign prince as decided by a treaty between her own nation and the foreign one. The blue fairy says, "I don't see why she has to marry any old prince" to which the pink fairy responds, "that's not for us to decide, dear."¹⁰⁵ This line not only shows the importance of the idea of love within this story, but also goes further to show how great the maternal love of the fairies is for Aurora. Disney creates a family through these three women who love and protect her for her entire childhood. Although these are magical beings, the story explains that in order to avoid attracting Maleficent's attention, they give up their magic and lock away their wands until her sixteenth birthday, living instead as normal human women. By making their actions so influential in the tale that Phillip could not rescue Aurora without their help, and by making them so driven to help her, Disney is showing the lengths a loving family can overcome. Through giving Aurora a greater voice in this tale and thus gains power, Disney is still able to use her perseverance to show the strength of family in which the patriarchy is upheld. She is a strong figure, but so is her father. They work in tandem to create an unstoppable familial force so that Disney's movie not only uplifts the father, but also uplifts the daughter. Further, by granting her a voice

¹⁰⁵ Disney, *Sleeping Beauty*, 49:12

where no other story does, Disney gives a voice to the figure of a daughter. She is important not only as a future wife, not only as a princess, but also because she is still a daughter and thus Disney legitimizes this role.

While making changes both to the plot and the meaning of this story, Disney still makes a direct reference to and commentary on previous tales. The most striking example of this is the reference to the one hundred year span of the curse in previous stories. This reference comes in the poem Maleficent recites about the fate of Aurora under the curse. In this monologue, Maleficent says that she will remain asleep until one hundred years pass by when, old, decrepit and bent with age, the prince is released from her dungeons to wake her.¹⁰⁶ In previous stories this hundred years was a blessing, a way to lighten the curse but here the hundred years is the curse itself. Disney changes what was positive into a threat of what the evil Maleficent desires. While they reference the previous duration of the curse, they also show that through the fairies' magic, the characters are able to prevent that lapse of time.¹⁰⁷ Instead, because of the love not only between Phillip and Aurora, but also because of the maternal love of the fairies who do everything they can to help her, the spell is broken. The commentary this makes is to say that the waiting is unnecessary and can be avoided. When one, like Brier-Rose,

¹⁰⁶ Disney, *Sleeping Beauty*, 1:03:00

¹⁰⁷ The animators also reference previous versions in the end when Maleficent constructs a giant wall of thorn-encrusted branches around the castle to prevent Phillip from entering it and breaking the curse. Here, however, instead of the thorns being a means of protection as they were in older stories, they are a hindrance to the well-being of Sleeping Beauty.

has the family of fairies at her side, she is able to be rescued. Disney uses magic throughout the story, but the ending shows that for Disney, love is equated with magic. When the prince uses “true love’s kiss,” he is still using magic, just in the guise of something more real-worldly and attainable. Disney is crediting love with having magic. This, while sounding positive and uplifting, serves a greater purpose. As has been said, Walt Disney worked through his films to uplift the family spirit. Therefore, by ennobling love and the capacities of familial love through the fairies in particular, Disney is strengthening the claim of the necessity for family.

Finally, the relationship between King Stephen and Aurora not only has a cultural impact on the reception of these tales, but also further elucidates the importance of family highlighted in this film. In the previous chapter, this father was discussed as being successful both as a father and as a king, but here it is important to also note that part of his success is due to the relationship he has with his daughter. Because Disney shifted the plot to a more youthful time in Aurora’s life, they are able to show through her goodness and her strength that his parenting model has worked. They are also able to highlight her time as a daughter and a child so that the audience pays more attention to the ways in which her father is a good example. While he is not directly with her, the audience is clear that he is a good and present father, and that he is neither absent nor passive but rather doing what he must to protect her. Thus magic, active participation of the daughter, success of the father, and a limited portrayal of marriage all work in unison to uplift the family and present a strong role model for audiences. Whereas in

other stories, the lack of marriage might be seen as indicative of the weakness of the family, in this particular story it is instead a strength. This is because with a father who is present and active in a positive light, marriage only serves to detract from the unique goodness of his character. Limiting marriage while empowering the daughter further allows Disney to ennoble the father and the family in which the patriarchal structure of authority is effective and intact.

III. CINDERELLA

Cinderella stories are an appropriate culmination to this discussion because they both feature the most active father and the most active daughter. As was discussed previously, the father of these stories is not only the most present, but also the most meddling and the greatest antithesis to what a father should be. This inflated role is reflected in his marriages because he is the only father who readers see both before and after his union to the evil stepmother. This allows the audience to explicitly see how he is corrupted, heightening his perceived weakness. However, he is not the only empowered character in this story; Cinderella is a figure unlike the other princesses because she actively seeks out magic to create a better life and explicitly uses that magic to find a husband. The marriages these Cinderella figures create are exemplary of the focus of the narrative, and thus the changes made to her marriage are an excellent starting point in understanding the motives of Cinderella figures and in demonstrating how she grows in autonomy through the chronology of the tales.

For Cinderella, marriage is not a corruptor, as it is for her father, but rather a liberator. The end of these stories is almost always specific to say that Cinderella and the prince marry and beyond that to show their wedding. This wedding is used as a time for justice: in Basile's tale it is to show Zezolla's rightful royalty; in Perrault's, it is to show Cinderella's ultimate goodness (and the father's ultimate wickedness) by showing kindness to her sisters; in the Grimms' it is a time to punish the sisters; in Disney's movie it is a means of eradicating the wicked figures so Cinderella can start over. That these stories all use the wedding in this way is important because the wedding symbolizes the end of Cinderella's old life and the start of her new one. These judgmental weddings give Cinderella the security of marriage so she can enact what she sees fitting as justice for her remaining family members.

Basile's treatment of marriage is such that it is used to show how Zezolla, although a servant, was the rightful queen all along. The story ends when the King recognizes Zezolla as his bride; the text explains that "when the king saw this, he ran and took Zezolla in his arms and led her to sit on the throne beneath the canopy, where he put the crown on her head and ordered everyone to bow and curtsy to her as their queen."¹⁰⁸ This is the only story in which there is not a wedding scene because instead there is a coronation scene. For Basile, it was more important to restore Cinderella to the throne than it was to show her marriage. It is also important that this story is different from all the rest in that the way the King and Zezolla meet is not through a ball

¹⁰⁸ Basile, "The Cat Cinderella," Zipes, Great Fairy Tale Tradition, 449

which he hosts, but rather at a town-wide festival. The text explains that after is magically dressed up, “Now it so happened that the king appeared at this same place, caught sight of the incredible beauty of Zezolla, and was immediately enchanted by her.”¹⁰⁹ What is clear here is that marriage was the goal of neither the King nor Zezolla. They both went out to attend the festival for pleasure, not for marital purposes, and so marriage is not actually the focus in this story. As the story evolves in subsequent versions, marriage becomes increasingly important to the Cinderella characters until eventually with Disney, it is the expressed goal. The replacement of marriage with royalty in Basile’s story illustrates a point that will be carried out throughout the history of the Cinderella tradition. Cinderella appears to be a servant but is in fact royalty. Maria Tatar explains that “the malice of the biological parents performs a double function in the narrative economy of the fairy tale: it pins the blame on the parents for the hero’s low social status and explains just why the hero was deprived of his birthright in the first place.”¹¹⁰ This plays out within the context of Cinderella stories and specifically here because Zezolla is the rightful queen, yet she is denied that by her low standing and the abuse inflicted by her stepmother. Zezolla does not even require a formal coronation in order to be crowned queen; she simply has to be put in place by one who can see her real nature. As the stories progress from this point, marriage increasingly becomes a

¹⁰⁹ Basile, “The Cat Cinderella,” Zipes, *Great Fairy Tale Tradition*, 447

¹¹⁰ Maria Tatar, *The Hard Facts of the Grimms’ Fairy Tales*, 77

focus of the story, and the ways marriage is used continues to highlight undercurrents of meaning within the tales.

After Basile's tale is Perrault's and then the Grimms. However, these two tales are best studied in conjunction because the marriages at the end of the stories work towards the same point but in vastly different ways. It is also important to study them together because this shift in the use of marriage directly contributes to Disney's shift from drawing inspiration from the Grimms' tales to basing the movies on Perrault's stories. Although they used the Grimms' story as the basis for *Snow White*, in *Sleeping Beauty* and *Cinderella* they use Perrault's versions. One of the key differences between these stories is the brutality of the Grimms and the benevolence of Perrault's, and their vastly different treatment of Cinderella's marriage is a prime example of this. Both stories use the wedding as a way to reexamine the stepsisters. In the Grimms' work, the conclusion is that they are evil and must be punished for their wickedness. The last lines of the story explain how the sisters were punished:

“When the wedding with the prince was to be held, the two false sisters came, wanting to gain favor with Cinderella and to share her good fortune. When the bridal couple walked into the church, the older sister walked on their right side and the younger on their left side, and the pigeons pecked out one eye from each of them. Afterwards, as they came out of the church, the older one was on the left side, and the younger one on the right side, and then the pigeons pecked out the other eye from each of them. And thus, for their wickedness and falsehood, they were punished with blindness as long as they lived.”¹¹¹

¹¹¹ Grimms, 1856, “Cinderella”

This is clear about how wicked the sisters were and how deserving they were of punishment they received. It also is graphic in explaining the nature of their punishment and serves as a clear warning for children listening not to be wicked. The Grimms use a negative reinforcement approach here to scare children into submission. However, Perrault takes nearly the opposite approach. Rather than condemn the sisters, he amplifies Cinderella's goodness and demonstrates that children who are good get what they desire. When Cinderella is revealed to be the princess, the text explains that:

“[The sisters] threw themselves at her feet to beg pardon for all the ill treatment they had made her undergo. Cinderella took them up, and, as she embraced them, said that she forgave them with all her heart, and wanted them always to love her. She was taken to the young prince, dressed as she was. He thought she was more charming than before, and, a few days after, married her. Cinderella, who was no less good than beautiful, gave her two sisters lodgings in the palace, and that very same day matched them with two great lords of the court.”¹¹²

These are notably not the last lines of the text and after this scene Perrault supplies readers with two conclusions that talk about how goodness is rewarded. Perrault's ending shows that Cinderella truly is a character of pure goodness and deserving of everything she received. She is an inspiration to be good rather than a warning. The reversal of treatment of the sisters in this story is important because it changes who is seen as guilty. If the sisters are punished, as in the Grimms' story, then they are the ones at fault. However, what Perrault proposes here is that it is not their fault they are so

¹¹² Perrault, “The Little Glass Slipper”

wicked but rather the fault of bad parenting. In this section, Cinderella steps up to take the place of the father by arranging the marriages of her sisters and providing them with homes. She uplifts all the children who were not being properly cared for by the weak and awful father, using her marriage to rescue both her sisters and herself. Perrault puts a distinct blame on the parents rather than the children, instead portraying all the children as the victims and heroines of his story. The vilification of the parents is a common trope in fairy tale literature. Maria Tatar explains, “ultimately the hero’s parents- his protectors and guardians- are directly implicated in the misfortunes that besiege him. The errors of their ways, ranging from neglect to tyranny, fuel the conflicts that drive fairy tale plots.”¹¹³ For Perrault, this means that by forgiving the sisters at Cinderella’s wedding, the sisters are being freed of the abuses of their parents and starting anew, just as Cinderella is, through the discovery of a new family. Where the Grimms use marriage as a way of delivering penal justice, Perrault uses it as a means of granting pardon and forgiveness.

Disney’s treatment of marriage within this tale, while different from all of the other stories, takes definite cues from Perrault. Instead of using it as a source of punishment, they use it as a way to promote Cinderella’s true family. Maria Tatar explains that “the family established at the tale’s end comes to constitute the hero’s true family circle,” an idea which Disney implements through this marriage. The movie concludes with Cinderella and the Prince leaving their wedding ceremony, and pans to

¹¹³ Maria Tatar, 1987, 59

show the audience all of Cinderella's animal friends happy and smiling as she goes by. None of the antagonist characters- the mother, stepsisters, or even Lucifer the cat- are present, thus giving Cinderella a clean start with her new family. Through her marriage she has rid herself of the negative influences in her life and welcomed in only the beneficial. Disney, rather than punishing any character, casts the evil figures out of the picture so as to say that marriage solves all of Cinderella's problems. She does not need to worry about the abuses she faced earlier because they are in a life that is different from her new married one. Disney ennobles the institution of marriage so that the audience sees it as the solution. This is an even more important conclusion when Cinderella's agency is taken into account because it is clear throughout the story that she desires not only to go to the ball, but to go specifically so that she can marry the prince. Among the tales, Cinderella figures are portrayed as tricksters, servant girls who use magic to dress up, sneak out of the home, lie to their masters and even sometimes gloat about their exploits. Through the progression of the tales, the Cinderella characters' trickster qualities grow and increase until Disney, in the seemingly most innocent version of the tale, creates the most distinctly driven and motivated Cinderella of all the figures.

The trickster tradition begins with Basile's *Zeuzella* who waits until her sisters have left home to sneak out and go to the ball. What is particularly telling about this story is not the lengths of magic she goes to in order to attend the ball, but rather the lengths she goes to in order to avoid being caught. Through the story she goes to three

different festivals, each time clothed in magically provided clothing and each time attracting the attention of the king who sends a servant after her. With each festival she must work harder to avoid being identified by the slave. The first time she attends, the text says that when she realized the servant was following her, “she threw down a handful of gold coins from the date tree that she had obtained for this purpose.”¹¹⁴ This distraction suffices for the first interaction, but with increasing threats of beatings from the king, the second time she had to create a bigger distraction so she threw down pearls and jewels. By the third time, the servant is so intent on not disobeying the king that he ties himself to the coach; Zezolla responds by instructing the coachmen to use the whip so that she travels so fast the servant is unable to keep up. With each festival, Zezolla becomes more and more desperate to avoid being caught. Her intent throughout the story is to dress up, attend the festival, and make “her sisters’ mouths water” from jealousy.¹¹⁵ She seeks to anonymously make her sisters upset, jealous and inadequate, not to be named or found herself. Further, she plans escape tactics to help keep her identity secret.

The Cinderella of Perrault’s story takes the desire for jealousy further. This character is not content to simply pretend she was asleep all night; instead she must put on a display of proving her false innocence to her sisters. It is not enough for this Cinderella to cause the jealousy, she must revel in it as well. When her sisters return

¹¹⁴ Basile, “The Cat Cinderella,” Zipes, Great Fairy Tale Tradition, 447

¹¹⁵ Basile, “The Cat Cinderella,” Zipes, Great Fairy Tale Tradition, 448

home, this Cinderella puts on a show, exclaiming "You stayed such a long time!" she cried, gaping, rubbing her eyes and stretching herself as if she had been sleeping; she had not, however, had any manner of inclination to sleep while they were away from home."¹¹⁶ Here she knowingly and actively deceives her sisters, trying to pretend that she was sleeping but woke up so she could ask about their nights. In reality, she is excited to hear of how they will speak of her, the princess, but disguises this interest by seeming innocent and sad that she cannot attend.

The Grimms' Cinderella, in a clear progression of this tale, takes the deception of the sisters and family even further. It is not enough to plan her escape as Basile's Cinderella did, and to put on a show of false innocence when the sisters return home as Perrault's does. This character concocts a whole story of how she knows the details of the ball and flaunts this knowledge to her sisters the day afterwards. Here Cinderella, in an escalation of Perrault's version, is intent on hearing about how miraculous her own beauty is, and like Basile's, seeks out the jealousy of her sisters. For example, when her sisters begin to tell her about the ball:

They said, "Cinderella, it was so grand at the ball. The prince, who is the best looking man in the whole world, escorted us, and he is going to choose one of us to be his wife."

"Yes," said Cinderella, "I saw the glistening lights. It must have been magnificent."

"Now just how did you do that?" asked the oldest one.

"By standing up there on the pigeon roost."¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Perrault, "The Little Glass Slipper" Pitt.edu

¹¹⁷ Grimms, 1812, "Cinderella"

Here Cinderella volunteers information she doesn't have to, talks about elements of the ball she shouldn't have knowledge of, and easily lies to cover her tracks. From the reader's perspective, she is clearly lying and being deceitful. While the other characters may not see her treachery, the reader knows distinctly how she came across this knowledge and that she is being fraudulent. From the reader's point of view, therefore, this Cinderella is obviously a trickster and one who finds joy in being such. This becomes even more apparent when the same pattern repeats the following nights. Cinderella attends the ball and, as the story says, "However long she had suffered in ashes and sorrow, Cinderella was now living in splendor and joy," then proceeds to talk about her night indirectly with her sisters.¹¹⁸

So far it has been shown that throughout the tradition, the trickster qualities of the Cinderella character are not only apparent, but increasingly prevalent. This is important to recognize because it is the way in which Cinderella makes up for her father. Cinderella uses these qualities of deception, lying, and trickery in order to obtain for herself what her father refuses to do. It is not simply magic that allows her to attend the ball, it is her own willingness to compromise herself and to be a less than "perfect" figure of innocence that allows her to uphold the charade necessary for her attendance. As these qualities become more widespread in the tales, as Zezolla's hurry to get away becomes Perrault's Cinderella's sleepy show of innocence, which becomes the Grimms'

¹¹⁸ *ibid*

Cinderella's concocted night of viewing the festivities from afar, the role of magic and agency becomes just as increasingly noticeable. Cinderella is different from the other princesses in that she specifically calls for magic. In some stories, like Basile's and the Grimms', this magic emanates from a natural source, usually a tree instilled with the power of fairies (in Basile's story) or the power of a mother's love (in the Grimms'). In these cases, when Cinderella wants to go out each night she goes to her magical tree and tells it a riddle or sings to it so that it will drop down fine clothes to her. Even in Perrault's story, where there is the introduction of a fairy godmother, Cinderella still plays a direct role in the magic. She does this by suggesting what animals the godmother can use to transform into coachmen; the story explains, "Being at a loss for a coachman, Cinderella said, 'I will go and see if there is not a rat in the rat trap that we can turn into a coachman.' 'You are right,' replied her godmother, 'Go and look.'¹¹⁹ While she may not be casting the magic, she plays an essential part in helping to creating the conditions under which it could succeed. Further, as said before, without her direct agreement to the conditions of sneaking out, being back before her family got home, and the unspoken rule of not telling anyone, she would never have left the house in the first place.

Disney adds a level of depth to not only the Cinderella character, but also to her trickster qualities which is unprecedented in the tales before. This is because Disney's Cinderella expresses a desire not to go out and have fun, not to do what her sisters do,

¹¹⁹ Perrault, "The Little Glass Slipper"

but rather to go to see the prince. She is the only character to state a desire for marriage in this tradition and Disney is the only authorial source that creates female characters actively wishing for marriage. Among her fellow Cinderella figures, this character is different in that her story is the only story in which the ball only lasts for one night. In all the other versions, the festival goes on for many nights and, while implicitly can be seen as for marriage, often is not for that purpose. However, in Disney's Cinderella, the ball is the one night where the prince is said to be required to find his bride and thus Cinderella is given and takes this singular opportunity to change her future. Unlike other Cinderella's, this one is given an explicitly stated marital means of social elevation and escape from home from the very beginning of the story. Further, Disney's tendency to create female characters wishing for marriage is apparent in both *Snow White*, where Snow White sings about wishing for her true love, and in *Sleeping Beauty*, where Aurora asks for and mourns the loss of the right to marry the prince from her dreams. In *Cinderella*, the animators create scenes such as the one early in the story where Cinderella gazes out at the castle longingly while daydreaming and singing about love, marriage, and dreams.¹²⁰ The fact of these characters actively seeking out marriage, especially with Cinderella, changes the way the audience perceives her trickster qualities. Disney's figure fits the criteria to be labeled as a trickster: she sneaks out of the house, masquerades as someone she is not, and lies to her family about where she has been. However, because she does all of this under the context of finding

¹²⁰ Disney, *Cinderella*, 0:05:30

a marriage, especially considering that there is no father to arrange this marriage, the audience is able to view her as smart and self-sufficient rather than pleasure seeking. She is set apart from all other Cinderella tricksters because they did not have an explicit desire for marriage; instead the only explicit desire was to make their sisters jealous. Disney creates a more noble purpose for Cinderella's devious actions, which justifies them and makes them acceptable to the normative familial message Disney is determined to uphold. Although her motives have become more socially acceptable, to a critical reader, the legitimization of her motives does not change the fact that underneath the family values, this Cinderella is the most focused and purposeful of all princesses in the tradition. Unlike the Cinderellas before, who simply wanted a good time and usually happened into the marriage, this Cinderella seeks out and takes for herself what she desires. Under the sweet façade, Disney has drawn their Cinderella to be a figure of great strength, cunning, ability and motivation. While it is true that she can seem self-pitying at times, underneath her sad goodness is a character willing to seek out change. She is the only figure to directly ask for the marriage she so desperately wants and the only figure to completely leave her past behind. It is important that where previous Cinderella figures engaged their family in their wedding- Perrault's Cinderella forgave and gave marriages to her siblings while the Grimms' Cinderella punished and killed her stepmother- Disney's Cinderella makes no mention whatsoever of her human family, only showing her animal friends. This Cinderella demonstrates an unparalleled strength and motivation in that she creates for herself a

new family and sees it come to pass. She is not the weak slave dependent on a man to save her, but rather the rightful princess determined to do what she must to attain her love and her status.

IV. CONCLUSION

The princesses of fairy tales are strong and determined characters, made even stronger by their ability to work within the restricting patriarchal bounds of marriage. These daughters are unlike their fathers who, as men and as kings, have all the authority necessary to lead purposeful lives yet throw those powers away. Instead fairy tale daughters use the meager means available to them, aided by association with fairies and magic, to do what is nearly impossible. It is important to recognize, as has been shown, that the way the princesses do this is through the institution of marriage: marriage is not what confines them, but rather what sets them free. Recognizing this, there is a final point to be drawn from the relationship between fathers, daughters, and marriage. Marriage is the element that is supposed to both connect and drive apart fathers and daughters. It is the moment when they transform from daughters into wives, and when the girl is no longer her father's responsibility. While it is the father's responsibility to approve of this union and even to give the new couple land so they can support themselves, it is also the father's final duty to them. Snow White, Sleeping Beauty, and Cinderella all create these marriages themselves without their fathers, which means that instead of marriage being the link between a daughter and her father,

the daughters have fulfilled the fathers' responsibilities themselves. The father, after the point of marriage, is no longer required and thus these inept fairy tale fathers forever lose the chance to redeem themselves. The successful marriage, which is orchestrated by the girls, leaves no room for the father to perform his duties because he has given up that chance and that right. The father's loss enables the daughters to become the strong, powerful figures they are, and to take control of their own lives.

CONCLUSION

I began this work by talking about the importance of literary history; how Basile wrote in remembrance of Straparola; Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm with a clear memory of Perrault; Disney with an explicit knowledge of both the Grimms and Perrault.

Throughout this work, I have sought to show that the comparative history of these tales is illuminating, that it reveals the evolution of character development and changing interpretations of families, marriage, and duty. Many scholars, Jack Zipes not the least among them, have questioned why fairy tales stick- he's even written a book by that name. Within this work, he concludes that the survival of fairy tales "depends on our continual engagement with cultural traditions, opening them up, and opening ourselves in the process."¹²¹ I agree with this statement; if anything has been consistent throughout these stories it is that in every edition and revision, they change. Even within the same author's work, such as the Grimms, both significant and minor elements of the story change. Yet, for seemingly good reason, Zipes' believes that "Disney's film is also an attack on the literary tradition of the fairy tale. He robs the literary tale of its voice and changes its form and meaning".¹²² However, this is only true if Disney's stories are not considered as having equal merit as the literary tales. Although Disney created some of the most radical changes to the stories, doing so, by Zipes' own logic, is part of what allows them to survive. What Disney has done to the tales is an extension of the same

¹²¹ Zipes, *Why Fairy Tales Stick*, 243

¹²² Zipes, "Breaking the Disney Spell," 32

editing practices carried out by every fairy tale author before him. That said, Disney has created major shifts in these tales, especially in the specific instances of fathers and daughters. Obviously, from the popularity of the tales even today, Walt Disney did something right. Disney created tales that simultaneously could teach adults and inspire little children. Maria Tatar points out in the introduction to her work The Hard Facts of the Grimms' Fairy Tales that "folklorists are quick to point out that fairy tales were never really meant for children's ears alone" and this brings up a salient point.¹²³ The key word here is "alone:" these stories are meant for both children and adults. By creating father figures who are strong, daughter figures who are less mischievous, and magic that is based out of familial and parental love, Disney created cartoons which combined both entertainment for children and advice for parents. Disney changed the bad role models into good ones, but still managed to retain the same message: fathers and families are important and necessary for the proper upbringing of children. Although, as seen in the chapters on Daughters, fairy tale daughters are uniquely capable of being active and strong characters, for Disney, the story never ends with the strength of the daughter, but rather with the strength of the family be it the existing family in *Sleeping Beauty* or the new family in *Cinderella*. They may have done this differently from previous stories by using positive reinforcement, especially in the case of *Sleeping Beauty*, where they show a successful father and a successful daughter. Conversely, earlier tales demonstrate this idea through negative reinforcement, such as in *Cinderella*

¹²³ Maria Tatar, 1987, XIV

narratives where the bad father must be overcome through a direct call for and implementation of magic, in other words through undesirable means. However, both methods work towards the same idea about families and upbringing and both are legitimate.

Today we must recognize Disney as a genuine contributor to the history of these tales. The evolution of the daughter character, emanating from Perrault who modified Basile, and which was sustained by the Grimms, must continue today because, although Disney's cartoons have carried the stories the last seventy years, they will not continue to do so much longer. The fate of these stories rests in the academic world's acceptance of a new medium and a new perspective. We are proceeding into the digital age; where children are increasingly encouraged to use modern technology and are captivated by the colorful, the imaginative, and the technological. As beautiful as the written fairy tale is, it is no longer the primary medium of storytelling. However, as has been said, these stories aren't only for children. A very basic premise that my thesis rests on is that these stories are important and have something important to teach us. As scholars and appreciators of the literary tale, we cannot allow dedication to the hard copy to blind us from the future of these tales. With every new Disney cartoon, every live action film like Disney's *A Cinderella Story*, and every television drama like *Once Upon a Time*, the tales

are moving decidedly away from the literary, away from the shared story, and towards the digital, towards the individual experience.¹²⁴

Regardless of what Zipes, Bottingheimer or even I believe about the role these stories play in the history of the fairy tales they present, Disney has persisted with their revolutionary takes. Modern stories like *Tangled* can be seen as continuations of the development of family through the strength of a daughter figure. For instance, Rapunzel can be seen as the epitome of a strong female character. While maintaining elements of innocent naiveté, comical moments of her and the “prince” of the story, Flynn Rider (often involving a frying pan in an inversion of the typical housewife depiction), show that she is capable and willing to stand up for herself. She knows exactly what she wants, to see the lanterns, and goes after it with the utmost determination. In this story, Disney has completely elevated the daughter; they have made a female lead who is a truly modern inspiration to young girls to stick up for themselves and seek their dreams. Yet, this story does not end when she gets what she wants or sees the lantern. This story ends when she reunites with her proper family. Although it does conclude with a marriage, like in *Sleeping Beauty*, she must reunite with and include her family in that celebration. As strong and charismatic as she is, she is still, when it comes down to the end, a daughter.

¹²⁴ It is noteworthy here that all three of my examples stem from Disney subsidiaries such as ABC Network who produces the TV show.

In this thesis I have drawn three essential conclusions: fairy tale fathers, good or bad, are a warning and a role model for proper parental behavior; fairy tale daughters use marriage and magic to make up for the responsibilities their fathers can't or won't carry out; and that as the stories move towards the modern day, family becomes the crux of the tales. Through my analysis I have explored adaptations and evolutions of the stories throughout their histories to show the changing and unchanging concepts that both differentiate and connect the tales. Now, however, my focus has moved towards the future and this is a future that must be informed by the past in order to be successful. In this conclusion, I have argued for the empowerment of Disney stories because they are the present and they are the future. These tales are so important today that we are nearly born knowing them, but this should not be taken for granted. The power structures and family values in *Snow White*, *Sleeping Beauty*, and *Cinderella* are losing relevance. Yet we cannot further the progress of these characters and relationships without acknowledging their entire history and moving forward with that history firmly in mind.

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A Note: all but one of my primary source texts came from the Pitt.edu database collected by D.L. Ashliman (the one text which did not was Basile's "The Cat Cinderella"). Citing this page was a struggle, ultimately they are listed under the original author's name along with the title of that version of the story. I also included in the citation the name of the database and supporting website. Although D.L. Ashliman is not within the citations, I want to point out the importance of his contribution and that he himself did many of the translations.

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