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ARTICLES

27 **Innocent Initiations: Female Agency in Eroticized Fairy Tales**

Jeana Jorgensen

Bawdy folktales have generated controversy and scholarship for centuries, and their literary, sexually explicit descendants, eroticized fairy tales, are also deserving of attention. Marketed in short story collections as erotica, eroticized fairy tales use fairy-tale characters, plots, and themes as the setting for sexual adventures. Some of these tales focus on a naïve heroine's initiation into sexual pleasure without her knowing precisely what is going on. I have termed these "innocent initiation" tales. Their use of traditional fairy-tale motifs contributes to discourse about female sexuality, agency, and objectification.

38 **Corporealizing Fairy Tales: The Body, the Bawdy, and the Carnavalesque in the Comic Book *Fables***

Adam Zolkofer

Through a series of inversions of the structure and content of canonical European literary fairy tales, Bill Willingham's comic book *Fables* functions, at once, as parody, commentary, and as an ongoing fairy tale in its own right. The classic fairy-tale characters of the Grimms and Charles Perrault are given corporeal form—given sexuality and sensuality in the comic's pages—and through this transformation are reshaped into a refracting lens for the moral precepts of those collections. The result is a postmodern literary endeavor that is neither condemnation nor celebration of the material from which it draws, but something in between.

52 Guilty Pleasures: Reading Romance Novels as Reworked Fairy Tales

Linda J. Lee

Popular romance novels have much in common with traditional fairy tales: both are highly formulaic; invoke a fantasy realm; focus on the creation or reconciliation of a romantic pair; exist in an infinite variation of texts that fall into distinct types; and are often dismissed as being “trivial,” suggesting romantic fiction as a natural excursus of folkloristic inquiry into popular culture. This article examines how *Beauty and the Beast* (ATU 425C) is reworked in the paranormal romance subgenre. These erotic romances offer elaborated descriptions of the central couple’s intimate relationship, inverting the traditional fairy-tale structure by making the resolution of the male/female opposition the central narrative element.

67 Intellectualizing Smut: The Role of Tradition in Anne Rice’s *Sleeping Beauty*

Sarah Lash

Rewrites and analyses of “*Sleeping Beauty*” often focus on elucidating the tale’s sexual undertones. Anne Rice’s *Sleeping Beauty* trilogy (1983–1985) takes this further, using the tale as a vehicle for erotica. This article examines the novels in light of the traditional tale, scholarly literature on ATU 410, and the eroticization of the fairy tale. It looks at how Rice uses tradition, and posits that she does so consciously. The themes she explores are more than pornographic as they comment on the storytelling tradition in a complex and fascinating manner.

77 Erotic Infidelities: Angela Carter’s Wolf Trilogy

Kimberly J. Lau

Reading Angela Carter’s three consecutive versions of “*Little Red Riding Hood*” (the three wolf stories at the end of *The Bloody Chamber*) together with feminist interpretations of Lacanian psychoanalytic theory suggests the possibility of a radically different erotics based on a range of categorical slippages and unexpected characterizations of feminine sexuality. This other erotics simultaneously contests both the oppressive sexual ideologies at the heart of many of the classic Western fairy tales as well as the more recent attempts by women to rewrite fairy tales in an erotic vein.

95 The Infernal Desire Machines in Anne Thackeray Ritchie’s *Bluebeard’s Keys* and Angela Carter’s “The Bloody Chamber”

Shuli Barzilai

Between 1866 and 1874 Anne Thackeray Ritchie published nine revisions of classic fairy tales, such as: “*Beauty and the Beast*,” “*Bluebeard*,” “*Cinderella*,” “*Jack and the Beanstalk*,” and “*Little Red Riding Hood*.” Ritchie’s novella *Bluebeard’s Keys* (1874) is not only one of the more subversive narratives among these revisions but also, demonstrably, the most personally inflected fairy tale she undertook to rewrite. This essay begins with an exploration of the extratextual reality that informs *Bluebeard’s Keys* and its revisionary relation to Charles Perrault’s “*Bluebeard*.” The focus then turns to the intertextual grid in which Angela Carter’s “*The Bloody Chamber*” (1979) converges with diverse particulars in Perrault’s and Ritchie’s versions. Among the main points considered in this analysis are the distinct ways that an illicit erotic dimension of experience leaves its mark on a range of situations in *Bluebeard’s Keys* and “*The Bloody Chamber*.”

125 **Bloody Chambers and Labyrinths of Desire: Sexual Violence in Marina Warner's Fairy Tales and Myths**

Lisa G. Propst

In Marina Warner's study *From the Beast to the Blonde*, her novels *Indigo* and *The Leto Bundle*, and her short story "Ballerina: The Belled Girl Sends a Tape to an Impresario," she reinterprets fairy-tale scenes of sexual violence as, paradoxically, potential catalysts for women's self-assertion. She refuses to define rape by the suffering it causes. Her characters respond creatively—even problematically—to violation. In opposition to the belief that rape confines women in the position of objects, Warner portrays these women as active figures who demonstrate troubling desires at the same time as they achieve new self-expression.

143 **"Fitcher's [Queer] Bird": A Fairy-Tale Heroine and Her Avatars**

Pauline Greenhill

The heroine of "Fitcher's Bird" is a perverse self-creation, smart, a dandy, and a trickster with three avatars—sisters, skull, and bird. Her self-rescuing transvestism, ending evil and patriarchy, involves disguise as a fantastic, possibly androgynous bird. In a reading indebted to Luce Irigaray's critique of patriarchal psychoanalysis, I reflect on the tale's implicit criticism of the notion of the mirror stage, and on its transgressive representation of women. I undermine the Freudian and Lacanian reliance upon the visual—and, indeed, upon the presumptively male gaze—in a turn with Irigaray and Monique Wittig to feeling, the tactile.

TEXTS & TRANSLATIONS

171 **Two Tales from *Cruel Fairy Tales for Adults***

Kurahashi Yumiko / Translated by Marc Sebastian-Jones and Tateya Koichi

Best known for her political satire, experimental novels, and fantastic short stories, Kurahashi Yumiko was also the author of two collections of fairy tales. These tales, translated here into English for the first time, are both taken from *Cruel Fairy Tales for Adults* (1984). "A Mermaid's Tears" is based on Hans Christian Andersen's "The Little Mermaid," while "The Love Affair of Issun Bōshi" is a retelling of the medieval Japanese tale "Issun Bōshi." In their own way, both tales exemplify Kurahashi's contention that fairy tales are fundamentally cruel because they are governed by standards of retributive justice and didactic morals, and, in the case of her own tales, that they are for adults because their erotic nature might be considered too poisonous for children.

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