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# & TALES

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## ARTICLES

**15 Feminist Fairy-Tale Scholarship: A Critical Survey and Bibliography***Donald Haase*

Beginning with the controversy sparked by Alison Lurie's 1970 article on "Fairy Tale Liberation," this essay reviews significant developments in feminist fairy-tale scholarship over the next thirty years, especially in North America and Europe. Charting these developments helps to document the movement toward a more complex and nuanced understanding of the relationship between the fairy tale and gender, provides a context for the essays that follow in this special issue, and suggests directions for future research. This critical survey concludes with a bibliography of feminist/gender-based scholarship.

**64 Fertility Control and the Birth of the Modern European Fairy-Tale Heroine***Ruth B. Bottigheimer*

Recent historical studies suggest that until the close of the Middle Ages large numbers of European women were able to control their own fertility. Between 1500 and 1700, however, their ability to do so appears to have diminished and in the 1700s and 1800s to have been largely absent for the bulk of the population. There is also much evidence that women experienced a general deterioration in social and economic conditions from the end of the Middle Ages onward. Linking this body of evidence with tale collections' increasing thematization of pregnancy on the one hand and victimized girls and women on the other precisely at the point at which the European fairy tale emerges, I conclude that losing control of their own fertility was pivotal in forming the character of the modern fairy-tale heroine.

## 80 On Fairy Tales, Subversion, and Ambiguity: Feminist Approaches to Seventeenth-Century *Contes de fées*

Lewis C. Seifert

Feminist criticism has done much to enhance the visibility of seventeenth-century French fairy tales, especially those written by women. If feminist critics agree on the subversiveness of the women's *contes de fées*, they tend to differ on how to account for the ideological ambiguities of this corpus. This essay considers contrasting interpretations of three such ambiguities in the feminist-inspired books of Patricia Hannon (*Fabulous Identities*, 1998) and Lewis Seifert (*Fairy Tales, Sexuality, and Gender in France*, 1996). The representation of personal autonomy, nostalgia, and the marriage closure reveal the historical and textual complexity of the seventeenth-century French women's fairy tales. To continue to be productive, feminist approaches must account for this complexity.

## 99 German Fairy Tales, A User's Manual: Translations of Six Frames and Fragments by Romantic Women

Jeannine Blackwell

German Romantic women writers used a variety of fairy-tale motifs in their writings. This article presents the first English translations of the following texts: the foreword to the anonymous collection *Feen-Mährchen* (1801), a fairy-tale/dream segment in Karoline von Wolzogen's novel *Agnes von Lilien* (1798), an autobiographical fairy tale by Bettina von Arnim in *Clemens Brentanos Frühlingsskranz* (1844), writings by Karoline von Günderode on her incomplete fairy tale (ca. 1802), a fairy tale contributed to the Grimms' collection by Ludowine von Haxthausen (1818?), and a tale transcribed by Annette Droste-Hülshoff and Wilhelm Grimm (1813).

## 122 The Mirror Broken: Women's Autobiography and Fairy Tales

Elizabeth Wanning Harries

In the 1970s both Alison Lurie and her critics seemed to assume that fairy tales give us powerful, often damaging images of women which women must adopt or resist. But recent women's autobiographies often reveal a more oblique and complex relationship to fairy-tale patterns and imagery. Both Christa Wolf in her *Kindheitsmuster* (1976) and Carolyn Steedman in her *Landscape for a Good Woman* (1985) find broken reflections of their experiences in the fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm and Hans Christian Andersen. They repeatedly return to fragments of well-known tales that mirror a layered, inconsistent, even unknowable self.

## 136 Fire and Water: A Journey into the Heart of a Story

Kay Stone

I discuss two folktales with types of heroines that have generally been seen as opposites: one tale provides an heroic example while the other portrays a victim. Feminists, myself included, often viewed such protagonists as diametrically opposed. By emphasizing the deliberately enigmatic nature and the layered depths of fairy tales, I show how these heroines are, in fact, more sisters than opposites. I use my own telling of these stories over a number of years to illustrate how my ideas as a feminist folklorist have evolved since my first article appeared in 1975.

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**152 This Book Is for You**

*Jane Yolen*

Drawing on an open letter to her daughter and granddaughters, this personal essay by Jane Yolen relates her motivations for putting together a book of retold folk stories about young women—*Not One Damsel in Distress: World Folktales for Strong Girls*.

**TEXTS &  
TRANSLATIONS****159 The Wicked Sisters and the Good One: A Fairy Tale**

*Caroline Stahl* / Translated by Shawn C. Jarvis

This contribution includes a short biography of Caroline Stahl (1776–1834), commentary on her life and works, and a translation of her 1818 fairy tale “Die bösen Schwestern und die Gute” (“The Wicked Sisters and the Good One”).

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