***This is a PDF containing multiple documents pertaining to "Into the Woods" ***

These materials include:

1. The Uses of Enchantment: "Cinderella"
2. Cap to Cloak: The Evolution of "Little Red Riding Hood" from Oral Tale to Film
3. "Little Red Riding Hood": A Critical Theory Approach
4. A Musical Analysis of the Transformations of The Baker and The Baker's Wife in Stephen Sondheim's "Into the Woods"
5. The Uses of Enchantment: "Jack and the Beanstalk"
6. The Uses of Enchantment: Transformations- The Fantasy of the Wicked Stepmother
7. Sondheim Isn't Grim
8. Sondheim: "Into the Woods"

In "The Sleeping Beauty" this is further emphasized because not only she but her entire world—her parents, all inhabitants of the castle—returns to life the moment she does. If we are insensitive to the world, the world ceases to exist for us. When Sleeping Beauty fell asleep, so did the world for her. The world awakens anew as a child is nurtured into it, because only in this way can humanity continue to exist.

This symbolism got lost in the story's later forms which end with the awakening of Sleeping Beauty, and with it her world, to a new life. Even in the shortened form in which the tale came down to us, in which Sleeping Beauty is awakened by the kiss of the prince, we feel —without it being spelled out as in the more ancient versions—that she is the incarnation of perfect femininity.

"CINDERELLA"

By all accounts, "Cinderella" is the best-known fairy tale, and probably also the best-liked.[73] It is quite an old story; when first written down in China during the ninth century A.D., it already had a history.[74] The unrivaled tiny foot size as a mark of extraordinary virtue, distinction, and beauty, and the slipper made of precious material are facets which point to an Eastern, if not necessarily Chinese, origin.* The modern hearer does not connect sexual attractiveness and beauty in general with extreme smallness of the foot, as the ancient Chinese did, in accordance with their practice of binding women's feet.

"Cinderella," as we know it, is experienced as a story about the agonies and hopes which form the essential content of sibling rivalry; and about the degraded heroine winning out over her siblings who abused her. Long before Perrault gave "Cinderella" the form in which it is now widely known, "having to live among the ashes" was a symbol of being debased in comparison to one's siblings, irrespective of sex. In Germany, for example, there were stories in which such an ash-boy later becomes king, which parallels Cinderella's fate. "Aschenputtel" is the title of the Brothers Grimm's version of the tale.

*Artistically made slippers of precious material were reported in Egypt from the third century on. The Roman emperor Diocletian in a decree of A.D. 301 set maximum prices for different kinds of footwear, including slippers made of fine Babylonian leather, dyed purple or scarlet, and gilded slippers for women.[75]

The term originally designated a lowly, dirty kitchenmaid who must tend to the fireplace ashes.

There are many examples in the German language of how being forced to dwell among the ashes was a symbol not just of degradation, but also of sibling rivalry, and of the sibling who finally surpasses the brother or brothers who have debased him. Martin Luther in his *Table Talks* speaks about Cain as the God-forsaken evildoer who is powerful, while pious Abel is forced to be his ash-brother *(Aschebrüdel)*, a mere nothing, subject to Cain; in one of Luther's sermons he says that Esau was forced into the role of Jacob's ash-brother.[76] Cain and Abel, Jacob and Esau are Biblical examples of one brother being suppressed or destroyed by the other.

The fairy tale replaces sibling relations with relations between stepsiblings—perhaps a device to explain and make acceptable an animosity which one wishes would not exist among true siblings. Although sibling rivalry is universal and "natural" in the sense that it is the negative consequence of being a sibling, this same relation also generates equally as much positive feeling between siblings, highlighted in fairy tales such as "Brother and Sister."

No other fairy tale renders so well as the "Cinderella" stories the inner experiences of the young child in the throes of sibling rivalry, when he feels hopelessly outclassed by his brothers and sisters. Cinderella is pushed down and degraded by her stepsisters; her interests are sacrificed to theirs by her (step)mother; she is expected to do the dirtiest work and although she performs it well, she receives no credit for it; only more is demanded of her. This is how the child feels when devastated by the miseries of sibling rivalry. Exaggerated though Cinderella's tribulations and degradations may seem to the adult, the child carried away by sibling rivalry feels, "That's me; that's how they mistreat me, or would want to; that's how little they think of me." And there are moments—often long time periods—when for inner reasons a child feels this way even when his position among his siblings may seem to give him no cause for it.

When a story corresponds to how the child feels deep down—as no realistic narrative is likely to do—it attains an emotional quality of "truth" for the child. The events of "Cinderella" offer him vivid images that give body to his overwhelming but nevertheless often vague and nondescript emotions; so these episodes seem more convincing to him than his life experiences.

The term "sibling rivalry" refers to a most complex constellation of feelings and their causes. With extremely rare exceptions, the emo-

tions aroused in the person subject to sibling rivalry are far out of proportion to what his real situation with his sisters and brothers would justify, seen objectively. While all children at times suffer greatly from sibling rivalry, parents seldom sacrifice one of their children to the others, nor do they condone the other children's persecuting one of them. Difficult as objective judgments are for the young child—nearly impossible when his emotions are aroused—even he in his more rational moments "knows" that he is not treated as badly as Cinderella. But the child often feels mistreated, despite all his "knowledge" to the contrary. That is why he believes in the inherent truth of "Cinderella," and then he also comes to believe in her eventual deliverance and victory. From her triumph he gains the exaggerated hopes for his future which he needs to counteract the extreme misery he experiences when ravaged by sibling rivalry.

Despite the name "sibling rivalry," this miserable passion has only incidentally to do with a child's actual brothers and sisters. The real source of it is the child's feelings about his parents. When a child's older brother or sister is more competent than he, this arouses only temporary feelings of jealousy. Another child being given special attention becomes an insult only if the child fears that, in contrast, he is thought little of by his parents, or feels rejected by them. It is because of such an anxiety that one or all of a child's sisters or brothers may become a thorn in his flesh. Fearing that in comparison to them he cannot win his parents' love and esteem is what inflames sibling rivalry. This is indicated in stories by the fact that it matters little whether the siblings actually possess greater competence. The Biblical story of Joseph tells that it is jealousy of parental affection lavished on him which accounts for the destructive behavior of his brothers. Unlike Cinderella's, Joseph's parent does not participate in degrading him, and, on the contrary, prefers him to his other children. But Joseph, like Cinderella, is turned into a slave, and, like her, he miraculously escapes and ends by surpassing his siblings.

Telling a child who is devastated by sibling rivalry that he will grow up to do as well as his brothers and sisters offers little relief from his present feelings of dejection. Much as he would like to trust our assurances, most of the time he cannot. A child can see things only with subjective eyes, and comparing himself on this basis to his siblings, he has no confidence that he, on his own, will someday be able to fare as well as they. If he could believe more in himself, he would not feel destroyed by his siblings no matter what they might do to him, since then he could trust that time would bring about a desired rever-

sal of fortune. But since the child cannot, on his own, look forward with confidence to some future day when things will turn out all right for him, he can gain relief only through fantasies of glory—a domination over his siblings—which he hopes will become reality through some fortunate event.

Whatever our position within the family, at certain times in our lives we are beset by sibling rivalry in some form or other. Even an only child feels that other children have some great advantages over him, and this makes him intensely jealous. Further, he may suffer from the anxious thought that if he did have a sibling, his parents would prefer this other child to him. "Cinderella" is a fairy tale which makes nearly as strong an appeal to boys as to girls, since children of both sexes suffer equally from sibling rivalry, and have the same desire to be rescued from their lowly position and surpass those who seem superior to them.

On the surface, "Cinderella" is as deceptively simple as the story of Little Red Riding Hood, with which it shares greatest popularity. "Cinderella" tells about the agonies of sibling rivalry, of wishes coming true, of the humble being elevated, of true merit being recognized even when hidden under rags, of virtue rewarded and evil punished—a straightforward story. But under this overt content is concealed a welter of complex and largely unconscious material, which details of the story allude to just enough to set our unconscious associations going. This makes a contrast between surface simplicity and underlying complexity which arouses deep interest in the story and explains its appeal to the millions over centuries. To begin gaining an understanding of these hidden meanings, we have to penetrate behind the obvious sources of sibling rivalry discussed so far.

As mentioned before, if the child could only believe that it is the infirmities of his age which account for his lowly position, he would not have to suffer so wretchedly from sibling rivalry, because he could trust the future to right matters. When he thinks that his degradation is deserved, he feels his plight is utterly hopeless. Djuna Barnes's perceptive statement about fairy tales—that the child knows something about them which he cannot tell (such as that he likes the idea of Little Red Riding Hood and the wolf being in bed together)—could be extended by dividing fairy tales into two groups: one group where the child responds only unconsciously to the inherent truth of the story and thus cannot tell about it; and another large number of tales where the child preconsciously or even consciously knows what the "truth" of the story consists of and thus could tell about it, but does

not want to let on that he knows.[77] Some aspects of "Cinderella" fall into the latter category. Many children believe that Cinderella probably deserves her fate at the beginning of the story, as they feel they would, too; but they don't want anyone to know it. Despite this, she is worthy at the end to be exalted, as the child hopes he will be too, irrespective of his earlier shortcomings.

Every child believes at some period of his life—and this is not only at rare moments—that because of his secret wishes, if not also his clandestine actions, he deserves to be degraded, banned from the presence of others, relegated to a netherworld of smut. He fears this may be so, irrespective of how fortunate his situation may be in reality. He hates and fears those others—such as his siblings—whom he believes to be entirely free of similar evilness, and he fears that they or his parents will discover what he is really like, and then demean him as Cinderella was by her family. Because he wants others—most of all, his parents—to believe in his innocence, he is delighted that "everybody" believes in Cinderella's. This is one of the great attractions of this fairy tale. Since people give credence to Cinderella's goodness, they will also believe in his, so the child hopes. And "Cinderella" nourishes this hope, which is one reason it is such a delightful story.

Another aspect which holds large appeal for the child is the vileness of the stepmother and stepsisters. Whatever the shortcomings of a child may be in his own eyes, these pale into insignificance when compared to the stepsisters' and stepmother's falsehood and nastiness. Further, what these stepsisters do to Cinderella justifies whatever nasty thoughts one may have about one's siblings: they are so vile that anything one may wish would happen to them is more than justified. Compared to their behavior, Cinderella is indeed innocent. So the child, on hearing her story, feels he need not feel guilty about his angry thoughts.

On a very different level—and reality considerations coexist easily with fantastic exaggerations in the child's mind—as badly as one's parents or siblings seem to treat one, and much as one thinks one suffers because of it, all this is nothing compared to Cinderella's fate. Her story reminds the child at the same time how lucky he is, and how much worse things could be. (Any anxiety about the latter possibility is relieved, as always in fairy tales, by the happy ending.)

The behavior of a five-and-a-half-year-old girl, as reported by her father, may illustrate how easily a child may feel that she is a "Cinderella." This little girl had a younger sister of whom she was very

jealous. The girl was very fond of "Cinderella," since the story offered her material with which to act out her feelings, and because without the story's imagery she would have been hard pressed to comprehend and express them. This little girl had used to dress very neatly and liked pretty clothes, but she became unkempt and dirty. One day when she was asked to fetch some salt, she said as she was doing so, "Why do you treat me like Cinderella?"

Almost speechless, her mother asked her, "Why do you think I treat you like Cinderella?"

"Because you make me do all the hardest work in the house!" was the little girl's answer. Having thus drawn her parents into her fantasies, she acted them out more openly, pretending to sweep up all the dirt, etc. She went even further, playing that she prepared her little sister for the ball. But she went the "Cinderella" story one better, based on her unconscious understanding of the contradictory emotions fused into the "Cinderella" role, because at another moment she told her mother and sister, "You shouldn't be jealous of me just because I am the most beautiful in the family."[78]

This shows that behind the surface humility of Cinderella lies the conviction of her superiority to mother and sisters, as if she would think: "You can make me do all the dirty work, and I pretend that I am dirty, but within me I know that you treat me this way because you are jealous of me because I am so much better than you." This conviction is supported by the story's ending, which assures every "Cinderella" that eventually she will be discovered by her prince.

Why does the child believe deep within himself that Cinderella deserves her dejected state? This question takes us back to the child's state of mind at the end of the oedipal period. Before he is caught in oedipal entanglements, the child is convinced that he is lovable, and loved, if all is well within his family relationships. Psychoanalysis describes this stage of complete satisfaction with oneself as "primary narcissism." During this period the child feels certain that he is the center of the universe, so there is no reason to be jealous of anybody.

The oedipal disappointments which come at the end of this developmental stage cast deep shadows of doubt on the child's sense of his worthiness. He feels that if he were really as deserving of love as he had thought, then his parents would never be critical of him or disappoint him. The only explanation for parental criticism the child can think of is that there must be some serious flaw in him which accounts for what he experiences as rejection. If his desires remain unsatisfied and his parents disappoint him, there must be something wrong with

him or his desires, or both. He cannot yet accept that reasons other than those residing within him could have an impact on his fate. In his oedipal jealousy, wanting to get rid of the parent of the same sex had seemed the most natural thing in the world, but now the child realizes that he cannot have his own way, and that maybe this is so because the desire was wrong. He is no longer so sure that he is preferred to his siblings, and he begins to suspect that this may be due to the fact that *they* are free of any bad thoughts or wrongdoing such as his.

All this happens as the child is gradually subjected to ever more critical attitudes as he is being socialized. He is asked to behave in ways which run counter to his natural desires, and he resents this. Still he must obey, which makes him very angry. This anger is directed against those who make demands, most likely his parents; and this is another reason to wish to get rid of them, and still another reason to feel guilty about such wishes. This is why the child also feels that he deserves to be chastised for his feelings, a punishment he believes he can escape only if nobody learns what he is thinking when he is angry. The feeling of being unworthy to be loved by his parents at a time when his desire for their love is very strong leads to the fear of rejection, even when in reality there is none. This rejection fear compounds the anxiety that others are preferred and also maybe preferable—the root of sibling rivalry.

Some of the child's pervasive feelings of worthlessness have their origin in his experiences during and around toilet training and all other aspects of his education to become clean, neat, and orderly. Much has been said about how children are made to feel dirty and bad because they are not as clean as their parents want or require them to be. As clean as a child may learn to be, he knows that he would much prefer to give free rein to his tendency to be messy, disorderly, and dirty.

At the end of the oedipal period, guilt about desires to be dirty and disorderly becomes compounded by oedipal guilt, because of the child's desire to replace the parent of the same sex in the love of the other parent. The wish to be the love, if not also the sexual partner, of the parent of the other sex, which at the beginning of the oedipal development seemed natural and "innocent," at the end of the period is repressed as bad. But while this wish as such is repressed, guilt about it and about sexual feelings in general is not, and this makes the child feel dirty and worthless.

Here again, lack of objective knowledge leads the child to think that

he is the only bad one in all these respects—the only child who has such desires. It makes every child identify with Cinderella, who is relegated to sit among the cinders. Since the child has such "dirty" wishes, that is where he also belongs, and where he would end up if his parents knew of his desires. This is why every child needs to believe that even if he were thus degraded, eventually he would be rescued from such degradation and experience the most wonderful exaltation—as Cinderella does.

For the child to deal with his feelings of dejection and worthlessness aroused during this time, he desperately needs to gain some grasp on what these feelings of guilt and anxiety are all about. Further, he needs assurance on a conscious and an unconscious level that he will be able to extricate himself from these predicaments. One of the greatest merits of "Cinderella" is that, irrespective of the magic help Cinderella receives, the child understands that essentially it is through her own efforts, and because of the person she is, that Cinderella is able to transcend magnificently her degraded state, despite what appear as insurmountable obstacles. It gives the child confidence that the same will be true for him, because the story relates so well to what has caused both his conscious and his unconscious guilt.

Overtly "Cinderella" tells about sibling rivalry in its most extreme form: the jealousy and enmity of the stepsisters, and Cinderella's sufferings because of it. The many other psychological issues touched upon in the story are so covertly alluded to that the child does not become consciously aware of them. In his unconscious, however, the child responds to these significant details which refer to matters and experiences from which he consciously has separated himself, but which nevertheless continue to create vast problems for him.

In the Western world the history of "Cinderella" in print begins with Basile's story "The Cat Cinderella."[79] In it, we are told of a widowed prince who loves his daughter so much "that he saw with no other eyes but hers." This prince marries an evil woman who hates his daughter—we may assume out of jealousy—and "threw sour looks on her, enough to make her jump with fright." The girl complains about this to her beloved governess, saying that she wishes the prince had married the governess instead. The governess, tempted by this possibility, tells the girl, named Zezolla, to ask her stepmother to fetch some clothes out of a big chest so that as the woman is bending into the chest, Zezolla can slam the lid on her head and thus break her neck. Zezolla follows this advice and kills her stepmother.[80] Then she persuades her father to marry the governess.

Within days after the marriage, the new wife begins to promote her own six daughters, whom she has kept hidden up till now. She turns the father's heart against Zezolla, who is "brought to such a pass that she fell from the salon to the kitchen, from the canopy to the grate, from splendid silks and gold to dish-clouts, from scepter to spits; not only did she change her state, but also her name, and was no longer Zezolla, but 'Cat Cinderella.' "

One day when the prince is about to go on a trip, he asks all his daughters what they want him to bring back to them. The stepdaughters ask for various expensive things; Zezolla requests only that he recommend her to the dove of the fairies and beg them to send her something. The fairies send Zezolla a date tree with materials for planting and cultivating it. Soon after Cat Cinderella has planted and tended the tree with great care, it grows to the size of a woman. A fairy comes out of it and asks Cat Cinderella what she wants. All she wishes is to be able to leave the house without her stepsisters knowing.

On the day of a great feast, the stepsisters dress fancily and go to the feast. As soon as they have left, Cat Cinderella "ran to the plant and uttered the words the fairy had taught her, and at once she was decked out like a queen." The country's king, who happens to come to the feast, is bewitched by Cat Cinderella's extraordinary loveliness. To find out who she is, he orders one of his servants to follow her, but she manages to elude him. The same events occur on the next feast day. During a third celebration, events again repeat themselves, but this time, while being pursued by a servant, Cat Cinderella lets slip from her foot "the richest and prettiest patten you could imagine." (In Basile's time Neapolitan ladies wore high-heeled overshoes, called pattens, when they went out.) To find the beautiful girl to whom the shoe belongs, the king orders all the females in the kingdom to come to a party. At its end, when the king orders all females to try on the lost patten, "the moment it came near Zezolla's foot, it darted forward of itself to shoe her." So the king makes Zezolla his queen, and "the sisters, livid with envy, crept quietly home to their mother."

The motif of a child killing a mother or stepmother is very rare.* Zezolla's temporary degradation is so inadequate a punishment for murder that we have to look for some explanation, particularly since her debasement to being "Cat Cinderella" is not retaliation for this

*In one story of the "Brother and Sister" type, *"La Mala Matrè,"* the children kill an evil mother on the advice of a female teacher and, as in Basile's story, ask their father to marry the teacher.[81] This tale, like Basile's, is of South Italian origin, so it seems likely that one served as a model for the other.

evil deed, or at least not directly so. Another unique feature of this story is the duplication of stepmothers. In "Cat Cinderella" we are told nothing about her true mother, who is mentioned in most "Cinderella" stories; and it is not a symbolic representation of the original mother who provides her mistreated daughter with the means for meeting her prince, but a fairy in the form of a date tree.

It is possible that in "Cat Cinderella," real mother and first stepmother are one and the same person at different developmental periods; and her murder and replacement are an oedipal fantasy rather than a reality. If so, it makes good sense that Zezolla is not punished for crimes she only imagined. Her degradation in favor of her siblings may also be a fantasy of what might happen to her if she would act on her oedipal wishes. Once Zezolla has outgrown the oedipal age and is ready to have good relations with her mother once again, the mother returns in the form of the fairy in the date tree and enables her daughter to gain sexual success with the king, a non-oedipal object.

That Cinderella's position is the consequence of an oedipal relation is suggested by many versions in this cycle of fairy tales. In stories which are diffused all over Europe, Africa, and Asia—in Europe, for example, in France, Italy, Austria, Greece, Ireland, Scotland, Poland, Russia, Scandinavia—Cinderella flees from a father who wants to marry her. In another group of widely distributed tales she is exiled by her father because she does not love him as much as he requires, although she loves him well enough. So there are many examples of the "Cinderella" theme in which her degradation—often without any (step)mother and (step)sisters being part of the story—is the consequence of oedipal entanglement of father and daughter.

M. R. Cox, who has made a comprehensive study of 345 "Cinderella" stories, divides them into three broad categories.[82] The first group contains only the two features which are essential to all: an ill-treated heroine, and her recognition by means of a slipper. Cox's second main group contains two more essential features: what Cox in her Victorian manner calls an "unnatural father"—that is, a father who wants to marry his daughter—and another feature which is a consequence of this—the heroine's flight, which eventually makes her into a "Cinderella." In Cox's third large grouping, the two additional features of the second are replaced by what Cox calls a "King Lear Judgment": a father's extracting from his daughter a declaration of love which he deems insufficient, so that she is therefore banished, which forces her into the "Cinderella" position.

Basile's is one of the very few "Cinderella" stories in which the heroine's fate is clearly her own creation, the result of her plotting and misdeed. In practically all other versions, she is on the surface entirely innocent. She does nothing to arouse her father's wish to marry her; she does not fail to love her father, although he banishes her because he thinks she does not love him enough. In the stories now best known, Cinderella does nothing that would warrant her debasement in favor of her stepsisters.

In most "Cinderella" stories, except Basile's, Cinderella's innocence is stressed; her virtue is perfect. Unfortunately, in human relations it is rare that one of the partners is innocence incarnate while the other is the sole guilty party. In a fairy tale this is of course possible; it is no greater miracle than those performed by fairy godmothers. But when we identify with a story's heroine, we do so for our own reasons, and our conscious and unconscious associations enter into it. A girl's thoughts about this story may be strongly influenced by what she wishes to believe about her father's relation to her, and what she desires to dissemble about her feelings toward him.[83]

The many stories in which innocent Cinderella is claimed by her father as his marital partner, a fate from which she can save herself only through flight, could be interpreted as conforming to and expressing universal childish fantasies in which a girl wishes her father would marry her and then, out of guilt because of these fantasies, denies doing anything to arouse this parental desire. But deep down a child who knows that she does want her father to prefer her to her mother feels she deserves to be punished for it—thus her flight or banishment, and degradation to a Cinderella existence.

The other stories in which Cinderella is expelled by her father because she does not love him enough may be viewed as a projection of a little girl's wish that her father should want her to love him beyond reason, as she wants to love him. Or the father's expulsion of Cinderella because she does not love him enough could equally well be regarded as giving body to paternal oedipal feelings for a daughter, in this way making an appeal to the unconscious and by now deeply repressed oedipal feelings of both father and child.

In Basile's story Cinderella is innocent in relation to her stepsisters and the governess turned stepmother, although she is guilty of murdering her first stepmother. Neither in Basile's story nor in the much more ancient Chinese tale is there any mention of Cinderella being mistreated by her siblings, nor of any debasement other than being forced by a (step)mother to perform menial tasks in tattered clothes.

She is not deliberately excluded from attending the feast. Sibling rivalry, so dominant in the presently known versions of "Cinderella," hardly plays a role in these early stories. For example, when the sisters in Basile's story are envious of Cinderella becoming queen, this seems no more than a natural reaction at losing out to her.

Matters are quite different in the "Cinderella" stories known today, where the siblings actively participate in Cinderella's mistreatment and are appropriately punished. Even so, nothing untoward happens to the stepmother, although she is very much an accessory to what the stepsisters inflict on Cinderella. It is as if the story implies that abuse by the (step)mother was somehow deserved, but not that by the stepsisters. What Cinderella may have done or wished to do which could justify the (step)mother's mistreatment can only be surmised from stories such as Basile's, or those others where she arouses so much love in the father that he wants to marry her.

Given these early "Cinderella" stories in which sibling rivalry plays only an insignificant role while oedipal rejections are central—a daughter flees from her father because of his sexual desires for her; a father rejects his daughter because she does not love him sufficiently; a mother rejects her daughter because the husband loves her too much; and the rare case where a daughter wishes to replace her father's wife with a choice of her own—one might think that, originally, thwarted oedipal desires account for the heroine's degradation. But there is no clear historical sequence in regard to these fairy stories forming one cycle, if for no other reason that, in oral tradition, ancient versions exist side by side with more recent ones. The lateness of the period when fairy stories were finally collected and published makes any sequential ordering of them before this happened highly speculative.

But while there are great variations in less important details, all versions of this story are alike in regard to the essential features. For example, in all stories the heroine at first enjoyed love and high esteem, and her fall from this favored position to utter degradation occurs as suddenly as her return to a much more exalted position at the story's end. The denouement comes about by her being recognized by the slipper which fits only her foot. (Occasionally another object, such as a ring, takes the slipper's place.[84]). The one crucial point of difference—in terms of which (as discussed) various groups of the stories are distinguished—lies in the *cause* of Cinderella's degradation.

In one group, the father plays a central role as Cinderella's antago-

nist. In the second group, the (step)mother *cum* stepsisters are the antagonists; in these stories, mother and daughters are so closely identified with each other that one gets the feeling that they are one unit split into different figures. In the first group, too much love of a father for his daughter causes Cinderella's tragic condition. In the other, the hatred of a (step)mother and her daughters due to sibling competition accounts for it.

If we trust the clues provided by Basile's story, then we may say that inordinate love of a father for his daughter and hers for him came first, and her reduction to the Cinderella role by mother *cum* sisters is the consequence. This situation parallels the oedipal development of a girl. She first loves her mother—the original good mother, who later in the story reappears as fairy godmother. Later she turns from her mother to her father, loving him and wanting to be loved by him; at this point the mother—and all her siblings, real and imagined, most of all the female ones—become her competitors. At the end of the oedipal period the child feels cast out, all alone; then when all goes well in puberty, if not sooner, the girl finds her way back to the mother, now as a person not to be loved exclusively, but as one with whom to identify.

The hearth, the center of the home, is a symbol for the mother. To live so close to it that one dwells among the ashes may then symbolize an effort at holding on to, or returning to, the mother and what she represents. All little girls try to return to the mother from the disappointment inflicted on them by the father. This attempted return to Mother, however, no longer works—because she is no longer the all-giving mother of infancy, but a mother who makes demands of the child. Seen in this light, at the story's beginning Cinderella mourns not only the loss of the original mother, but grieves also at the loss of her dreams about the wonderful relation she was going to have with Father. Cinderella has to work through her deep oedipal disappointments to return to a successful life at the story's end, no longer a child, but a young maiden ready for marriage.

Thus, the two groups of "Cinderella" stories which differ so greatly on the surface, in regard to what causes her misfortune, are not at all contrary on a deeper level. They simply render separately some main aspects of the same phenomenon: the girl's oedipal desires and anxieties.

Things are considerably more complex in the "Cinderella" stories now popular, which may go a long way to explain why these superseded some of the older versions, such as Basile's. The oedipal desires

for the father are repressed—except for the expectation that he will give her a magic present. The present her father brings Cinderella, such as the date tree in "Cat Cinderella," gives her the opportunity to meet her prince and gain his love, which leads to his replacing the father as the man she loves most in the world.

Cinderella's wish to eliminate Mother is completely repressed in the modern versions and replaced by a displacement and a projection: it is not Mother who overtly plays a crucial role in the girl's life, but a stepmother; Mother is displaced by a substitute. And it is not the girl who wants to debase Mother so that she will be able to play a much bigger role in her father's life, but, in a projection, it is the stepmother who wants to see the girl replaced. One more displacement further assures that the true desires remain hidden: it is her siblings who want to take the heroine's rightful place away from her.

In those versions, sibling rivalry takes the place of an oedipal involvement that has been repressed, as the center of the plot. In real life, positive and negative oedipal relations, and guilt about these relations often remain hidden behind sibling rivalry. However, as happens frequently with complex psychological phenomena which arouse great guilt, all that the person consciously experiences is anxiety due to the guilt, and not the guilt itself, or what caused it. Thus, "Cinderella" tells only about the misery of being degraded.

In the best fairy-tale tradition, the anxiety Cinderella's pitiful existence evokes in the hearer is soon relieved by the happy ending. By feeling deeply for Cinderella, the child (implicitly and without its coming to conscious awareness) deals in some fashion with oedipal anxiety and guilt, and also with the desires which underlie it. The child's hope of being able to disentangle herself from her oedipal predicament by finding a love object to whom she can give herself without guilt or anxiety is turned into confidence, because the story assures that entering the lower depths of existence is but a necessary step toward becoming able to realize one's highest potentials.

It must be stressed that it would be impossible, upon hearing the story of Cinderella in one of its presently popular forms, to recognize consciously that her unhappy state is due to oedipal involvements on her part, and that by insisting on her unrivaled innocence the story is covering up her oedipal guilt. The well-known "Cinderella" stories consistently obscure what is oedipal, and offer no hints to cast doubt on Cinderella's innocence. On a conscious level, the evilness of stepmother and stepsisters is sufficient explanation for what happens to Cinderella. The modern plot centers on sibling rivalry; the stepmo-

ther's degrading Cinderella has no cause other than the wish to advance her own daughters; and the stepsisters' nastiness is due to their being jealous of Cinderella.

But "Cinderella" cannot fail to activate in us those emotions and unconscious ideas which, in our inner experience, are connected with our feelings of sibling rivalry. From his own experience with it, the child might well understand—without "knowing" anything about it—the welter of inner experiences connected with Cinderella. Recalling, if she is a girl, her repressed wishes to get rid of Mother and have Father all to herself, and now feeling guilty about such "dirty" desires, a girl may well "understand" why a mother would send her daughter out of sight to reside among the cinders, and prefer her other children. Where is the child who has not wished to be able to banish a parent at some time, and who does not feel that in retaliation he merits the same fate? And where is the child who has not wanted to wallow to his heart's desire in dirt or mud; and, being made to feel dirty by parental criticism in consequence, become convinced that he deserves nothing better than to be relegated to a dirty corner?

The purpose of elaborating on "Cinderella's" oedipal background was to show that the story offers the hearer a deeper understanding of that which is behind his own feelings of sibling rivalry. If the hearer permits his unconscious understanding to "swing" along with what his conscious mind is being told, he gains a much deeper understanding of what accounts for the complex emotions which his siblings arouse. Sibling rivalry, both in its overt expression and in its denial, is very much part of our lives well into maturity, as is its counterpart, our positive attachments to our siblings. But because the latter rarely lead to emotional difficulties, and the former does, greater understanding of what is psychologically involved in sibling rivalry could help us deal with this important and difficult problem in our lives.

Like "Little Red Cap," "Cinderella" is known today mainly in two different forms, one which derives from Perrault, the other from the Brothers Grimm—and the two versions are considerably at variance.[85]

As with all of Perrault's stories, the trouble with his "Cinderella" is that he took fairy-tale material—either Basile's or some other "Cinderella" story known to him from oral tradition, or a combination of both sources—freed it of all content he considered vulgar, and refined its other features to make the product suitable to be told at court. Being an author of great skill and taste, he invented details and changed others to make the story conform to his aesthetic concepts.

It was, for example, his invention that the fateful slipper was made of glass, which is in no other versions but those derived from his.

There is quite a controversy about this detail. Since in French the word *vair* (which means variegated fur) and *verre* (glass) are sometimes pronounced similarly, it was assumed that Perrault, on having heard the story, mistakenly substituted *verre* for *vair* and thus changed a fur slipper into one made of glass. Although this explanation is often repeated, there seems no doubt that the glass slipper was Perrault's deliberate invention. But because of it he had to drop an important feature of many earlier versions of "Cinderella," which tell how the stepsisters mutilated their feet to make them fit the slipper. The prince fell for this deception until he was made aware by the songs of birds that there was blood in the shoe. This detail would have been immediately obvious had the slipper been made of glass. For example, in "Rashin Coatie" (a Scottish version) the stepmother forces the slipper onto her daughter's foot by cutting off her heel and toes. On the way to church a bird sings:

> "Minched fit, and pinched fit
> Beside the king she rides,
> But braw fit, and bonny fit
> In the kitchen neuk she hides."[86]

The bird's song brings to the prince's attention that the stepsister is not the right bride. But such coarse mutilation would not have fitted in with the polite way in which Perrault wished to retell his story.

Perrault's story and those directly based on it depict the character of the heroine quite differently from all other versions. Perrault's Cinderella is sugar-sweet and insipidly good, and she completely lacks initiative (which probably accounts for Disney's choosing Perrault's version of "Cinderella" as the basis for his rendering of the story). Most other Cinderellas are much more of a person. To mention only some of the differences, in Perrault it is Cinderella's choice to sleep among the cinders: "When she had done her work, she went to the corner of the chimney and sat down among the cinders," which led to her name. There is no such self-debasement in the Brothers Grimm's story; as they tell it, Cinderella *had* to bed down among the ashes.

When it comes to dressing the stepsisters for the ball, Perrault's Cinderella all on her own "advised them the best way in the world, and offered herself to do their hair," while in the Brothers Grimm's version the stepsisters order her to comb their hair and brush their

shoes; she obeys but weeps while doing so. As for getting to the ball, Perrault's Cinderella takes no action; it is her fairy godmother who tells her that she wishes to go. In the Brothers Grimm's story Cinderella asks her stepmother to let her go to the ball, persists in her request although turned down, and performs the impossible tasks demanded of her so that she can go. At the ball's end she leaves of her own accord and hides from the pursuing prince. Perrault's Cinderella does not depart because she considers it right to do so, but simply obeys a command of her fairy godmother not to remain one moment after midnight because otherwise the coach will again become a pumpkin, etc.

When it comes to the trying on of the slipper, in Perrault it is not the prince who searches for its owner, but a gentleman sent to look for the girl it fits. Before Cinderella is to meet the prince, her godmother appears and equips her with beautiful clothes. Thus, an important detail in the Brothers Grimm's and most other versions gets lost —namely, that the prince remains undismayed by Cinderella's appearance in rags because he recognizes her inherent qualities, apart from her outer appearance. Thus, the contrast between the materialistic stepsisters, who rely on externals, and Cinderella, who cares little about them, is reduced.

In Perrault's version it does not make all that much difference whether one is vile or virtuous. In his story the stepsisters are considerably more abusive of Cinderella than in that of the Brothers Grimm; nevertheless, at the end Cinderella embraces those who have vilified her and tells them that she loves them with all her heart and desires them always to love her. From the story, however, it is incomprehensible why she would care for their love, or how they could love her after all that has happened. Even after her marriage to the prince, Perrault's Cinderella "gave her two sisters lodging in the palace, and married them the same day to two great lords of the court."

In the Brothers Grimm's version the ending is quite different, as it is in all other renderings of the tale. First, the sisters mutilate their feet to make the slipper fit. Second, they come on their own to Cinderella's wedding to ingratiate themselves and have a share in her good fortune. But as they walk to the church, the pigeons—probably the same birds which had helped Cinderella earlier to meet the impossible tasks set her—pick out one eye from each, and as they return from church, the other. The story ends: "And thus for their wickedness and falsehood they were punished with blindness for the rest of their days."

Of the many other differences in these two versions, only two more will be mentioned. In Perrault's tale the father plays no role to speak of. All we learn about him is that he married a second time and that Cinderella "did not dare to complain to her father because he would only have scolded her, because he was entirely run by his wife." Also, we hear nothing about the fairy godmother until she suddenly appears from nowhere to provide Cinderella with her coach, horses, and dress.

Since "Cinderella" is the most popular of all fairy tales and is distributed worldwide, it may be appropriate to consider the important motifs woven into the story which, in their combination, make for its great conscious and unconscious appeal and its deep significance. Stith Thompson, who has made the most complete analysis of folk-tale motifs, enumerates those appearing in the Brothers Grimm's "Cinderella" as follows: an ill-treated heroine; her having to live by the hearth; the gift she asks of her father; the hazel branch she plants on her mother's grave; the tasks demanded of the heroine; the animals which help her perform them; the mother, transformed into the tree Cinderella grew on her grave, who provides her with beautiful clothes; the meeting at the ball; and Cinderella's threefold flight from it; her hiding first in a pigeon house and second in a pear tree, which are cut down by her father; the pitch trap and the lost shoe; the shoe test; the sisters' mutilation of their feet and acceptance as (false) brides; the animals which reveal the deception; the happy marriage; the nemesis wreaked on the villains.[87] My discussion of these story elements also includes some remarks on the better-known details of Perrault's "Cinderella" which are not part of the Brothers Grimm's tale.

Cinderella's mistreatment as a consequence of sibling rivalry, the story's main motif in its modern form, has already been dealt with. This is what makes the most immediate impact on the hearer and arouses his empathy. It leads him to identify with the heroine, and sets the stage for all that follows.

Cinderella's living among the ashes—from which she derives her name—is a detail of great complexity.* On the surface, it signifies

*It is unfortunate that "Cinderella" became known by this name in English, an all-too-facile and incorrect translation of the French *"Cendrillon,"* which, like the German name of the heroine, stresses her living among ashes. "Ashes" and not "cinders" is the correct translation of the French *cendre*, which is derived from the Latin term for ashes, *cinerem*. The *Oxford English Dictionary* makes a special point of noting that "cinders" is not connected etymologically with the French word *"cen-*

abuse, and degradation from the fortunate position she enjoyed before the beginning of the story. But it is not without reason that Perrault has her choose to dwell among the ashes. We are so accustomed to thinking of living as a lowly servant among the ashes of the hearth as an extremely degraded situation that we have lost any recognition that, in a different view, it may be experienced as a very desirable, even exalted position. In ancient times, to be the guardian of the hearth—the duty of the Vestal Virgins—was one of the most prestigious ranks, if not the most exalted, available to a female. To be a Vestal Virgin was to be much envied in ancient Rome. A girl was selected for this honor when she was between six and ten years old —roughly the age of Cinderella as we imagine her during her years of servitude. In the Brothers Grimm's story Cinderella plants a twig and cultivates it with her tears and prayers. Only after it has grown into a tree does it provide her with what she needs to go to the ball —thus, several years must have passed between the planting and the ball. Six to ten years old is also the age of children on whom this story makes the deepest impression, and it often stays with them and sustains them for the rest of their lives.

Speaking of Cinderella's years of servitude: only at later times did it become customary for Vestal Virgins to serve for thirty years before they gave up office and could marry. Originally they remained priestesses for only five years: that is, until they reached marriageable age. This is about the amount of time one imagines Cinderella's sufferings to last. To be a Vestal Virgin meant both to be a guardian of the hearth and to be absolutely pure. After they had performed well in the role, these women made prestigious marriages, as does Cinderella. Thus, innocence, purity, and being guardian of the hearth go together in ancient connotations.* It is possible that with the rejection of pagan-

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dres." This is important in regard to the connotations that attach themselves to the name of "Cinderella," since ashes are the very clean powdery substance which is the residue of complete combustion; cinders, to the contrary, are the quite dirty remnants of an incomplete combustion.

*The purity of the priestess responsible for the sacred fire, and fire itself, which purifies, evoke appropriate connotations also to ashes. In many societies ashes were used for ablutions, as a means of cleansing oneself. This was one of the connotations of ashes, although today it is no longer widespread.

The other connotation of ashes is to mourning. Sprinkling ashes over the head, as on Ash Wednesday, is still a sign of bereavement as it was in ancient times. Sitting among the ashes as a reaction to, and a sign of, mourning is mentioned in the *Odyssey*, and was practiced among many peoples.[88] By making Cinderella sit among cinders, and basing her name on it, these connotations to purity and to deep mourning which

ism, what had been a highly desirable role became devalued in the Christian era to be the meanest. The Vestal Virgins served the sacred hearth and Hera, the mother goddess. With the change to a father god, the old maternal deities were degraded and devalued, as was a place close to the hearth. In this sense, Cinderella might also be viewed as the degraded mother goddess who at the end of the story is reborn out of the ashes, like the mythical bird phoenix. But these are connections of a historical nature which the average hearer of "Cinderella" will not readily establish in his mind.

There are other, equally positive associations to living by the hearth which are available to every child. Children love to spend time in the kitchen, watching and participating in the preparation of food. Before central heating, a seat close to the hearth was the warmest and often the coziest place in the house. The hearth evokes in many children happy memories of the time they spent there with their mothers.

Children also like to get themselves good and dirty; to be able to do so is a symbol of instinctual freedom to them. Thus, being a person who stirs around in the ashes, the original meaning of the name Aschenbrödel, has also very positive connotations for the child. Making oneself "good and dirty" is both pleasurable and guilt-producing today, as it was in times past.

Finally, Cinderella mourns her dead mother. "Ashes to ashes" is not the only saying which establishes close connection between the dead and ashes. To cover oneself with ashes is a symbol of mourning; living in dirty rags is a symptom of depression. Thus, dwelling among the ashes may symbolize both lovely times with Mother in proximity to the hearth, and also our state of deep mourning for this intimate closeness to Mother which we lost as we grew up, symbolized by the "death" of Mother. Because of this combination of images, the hearth evokes strong feelings of empathy, reminding us all of the paradise in which we once dwelt, and how radically our lives changed when we were forced to give up the simple and happy existence of the very young child, to cope with all the ambivalences of adolescence and adulthood.

As long as the child is little, his parents protect him against the ambivalences of his siblings and the demands of the world. In retro-

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are connected with her original name in the Italian story (which by far antedates Perrault's tale), as much as with her French and German names, have become changed in English to the exact opposite connotations, referring to blackness and dirtiness.

spect this seems to have been a paradisal time. Then, suddenly, these older siblings seem to take advantage of the now less-protected child; they make demands; they and Mother become critical of what the child does. The references to his disorderliness, if not dirty habits, make him feel rejected and dirty; and the siblings seem to live in splendor. But their good behavior, the child believes, is a sham, a pretense, and a falsehood. And this is the image of the stepsisters in "Cinderella." The young child lives in extremes: at one moment he feels himself vile and dirty, full of hate; in the next he is all innocence, and the others are evil creatures.

Whatever the external conditions, during these years of sibling rivalry the child experiences an inner period of suffering, privation, even want; and he experiences misunderstandings, even malice. Cinderella's years among the ashes tell the child that nobody can escape this. There are times when it seems that only hostile forces exist, that no helpful ones are about. If the child being told the story of Cinderella did not come to feel that she had to endure a considerable stretch of such bad times, her relief would be incomplete when finally the helpful forces overcame the hostile ones. The child's misery at moments is so deep that it seems to last a very long time. Therefore no fleeting period in Cinderella's life would seem comparable to this. Cinderella must suffer as much and as long as the child believes he does, for her delivery to carry conviction and give him the certitude that the same thing will happen in his life.

After we have felt compassion for Cinderella's dejected state, the first positive development in her life occurs. "It once happened that the father wanted to go to a fair, so he asked the two stepdaughters what he should bring them. 'Beautiful clothes,' said one. 'Pearls and gems,' said the other. 'What about you, Aschenputtel,' he said, 'what do you want?' 'Father, the first twig that pushes against your hat on your return trip, break it off for me.' " He acts accordingly; a hazel branch not only pushes against his hat, but knocks it off. This branch he brings home to Aschenputtel. "She thanked him, went to her mother's grave and planted the branch on it; she wept so much that her tears fell on it and watered it. It grew and became a beautiful tree. There she went three times a day and wept and prayed; and each time a white bird lighted on the tree, and when she expressed a wish, the bird threw down what she had wished for."

Cinderella's asking her father for the twig she planned to plant on her mother's grave, and his meeting her desire, is a first tentative re-establishment of a positive relation between the two. From the

story we assume that Cinderella must have been very disappointed in her father, if not also angry that he married such a shrew. But to the young child, his parents are all-powerful. If Cinderella is to become master of her own fate, her parents' authority must be diminished. This diminution and transfer of power could be symbolized by the branch knocking the father's hat off his head, and also the fact that the same branch grows into a tree that has magic powers for Cinderella. Therefore, that which diminished the father (the branch of the hazel tree) is used by Cinderella to increase the power and prestige of the archaic (dead) mother. Since her father gives Cinderella the twig which enhances the memory of the mother, it seems to be a sign that he approves of her returning from her heavy involvement with him to the original unambivalent relation to the mother. This diminution of the father's emotional importance in Cinderella's life prepares the way for her transferring her childish love for him eventually into a mature love for the prince.

The tree which Cinderella plants on her mother's grave and waters with her tears is one of the most poetically moving and psychologically significant features of the story. It symbolizes that the memory of the idealized mother of infancy, when kept alive as an important part of one's internal experience, can and does support us even in the worst adversity.

This is told even more clearly in other versions of the story where the figure into which the good mother becomes transformed is not a tree but a helpful animal. For example, in the earliest recorded Chinese rendering of the "Cinderella" motif, the heroine has a tame fish which grows from two inches to ten feet under her devoted care. The evil stepmother discovers the importance of the fish, and cunningly kills and eats it. The heroine is desolate until a wise man tells her where the fish's bones are buried and advises her to collect and keep them in her room. He tells her that if she prays to these bones, she will obtain whatever she wishes. In many European and Eastern variations it is a calf, cow, goat, or some other animal into which the dead mother is transformed to become the heroine's magic helper.

The Scottish tale of "Rashin Coatie" is older than either Basile's or Perrault's "Cinderella," since it is mentioned as early as 1540.[89] A mother, before her death, bequeaths her daughter, Rashin Coatie, a little red calf, which gives her whatever she asks for. The stepmother finds out about this and orders the calf butchered. Rashin Coatie is desperate, but the dead calf tells her to pick up its bones and bury them under a gray stone. She does and henceforth receives what she

desires by going to the stone and telling the calf. At Yuletide, when everybody puts on their best clothes to go to the church, Rashin Coatie is told by her stepmother that she is too dirty to join them in church. The dead calf provides Rashin Coatie with beautiful clothes; in church a prince falls in love with her; on their third meeting she loses a slipper, etc.

In many other "Cinderella" stories the helpful animal also nourishes the heroine. For example, in an Egyptian tale a stepmother and stepsiblings mistreat two children, who beg, "O cow, be kind to us, as our mother was kind to us." The cow gives them good food. The stepmother finds out and has the cow butchered. The children burn the cow's bones and bury the ashes in a clay pot, from which a tree grows and bears fruits for the children, and this provides happiness for them.[90] So there are stories of the "Cinderella" type in which the animal and the tree representing the mother are combined, showing how one can stand for the other. These tales also illustrate the symbolic replacement of the original mother by an animal that gives us milk—the cow or, in Mediterranean countries, the goat. This reflects the emotional and psychological connection of early feeding experiences which provide security in later life.

Erikson speaks of "a sense of *basic trust*, which," he says, "is an attitude toward oneself and the world derived from the experience of the first year of life."[91] Basic trust is instilled in the child by the good mothering he experiences during the earliest period of his life. If all goes well then, the child will have confidence in himself and in the world. The helpful animal or the magic tree is an image, embodiment, external representation of this basic trust. It is the heritage which a good mother confers on her child which will stay with him, and preserve and sustain him in direst distress.

The stories where the stepmother kills the helpful animal but does not succeed in depriving Cinderella of what gives her inner strength indicate that for our managing or coping with life, what exists in reality is less important than what goes on in our mind. What makes life bearable even in the worst circumstances is the image of the good mother which we have internalized, so that the disappearance of the external symbol does not matter.[92]

One of the main overt messages of the various "Cinderella" stories is that we are mistaken if we think we must hold on to something in the external world to succeed in life. All efforts of the stepsisters to gain their goal through externals are in vain—their carefully selected and prepared clothes, the fraud through which they try to make their feet fit the shoe. Only being true to oneself, as Cinderella is, succeeds

in the end. The same idea is conveyed by the mother's or the helpful animal's presence not being required. This is psychologically correct, because for one's inner security and feeling of self-worth, no externals are necessary once one has developed basic trust—nor can externals compensate for not having attained basic trust in infancy. Those so unfortunate as to have lost out on basic trust at the beginning of life can achieve it, if at all, only through changes in the inner structure of their mind and personality, never through things that look good.

The image conveyed by the tree growing from a twig or the calf's bones or ashes is that of something different developing out of the original mother, or the experience of her. The image of the tree is particularly pertinent because growth is involved, whether it is Cat Cinderella's date tree or Cinderella's hazel branch. This indicates that simply to retain the internalized image of the mother of a past period is not enough. As the child grows up, this internalized mother must undergo changes, too, as he does. This is a process of dematerialization, similar to that in which the child sublimates the real good mother into an inner experience of basic trust.

In the Brothers Grimm's "Cinderella," all of this is refined even more. Cinderella's inner processes begin with her desperate mourning for her mother, as symbolized by her existence among the ashes. If she remained stuck there, no internal development would occur. Mourning as a temporary transition to continuing life without the loved person is necessary; but for survival it must eventually be turned into something positive: the erection of an internal representation of what has been lost in reality. Such an inner object will always remain inviolate within us, whatever happens in reality. Cinderella's weeping over the planted twig shows that the memory of her dead mother is kept alive; but as the tree grows, so does the internalized mother grow inside Cinderella.

Cinderella's prayers, also said over the tree, bespeak the hopes she cultivates. Prayers ask for something that we trust will happen: basic trust reasserts itself after the shock of adversity has worn off; this trust restores in us the hope that eventually things will again go well for us, as they have in our past. The little white bird which comes in answer to Cinderella's prayers is the messenger of Ecclesiastes: "A bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which has wings shall tell the matter." The white bird is easily recognized as the mother's spirit conveyed to her child through the good mothering she gives him; it is the spirit which originally became implanted in the child as basic trust. As such, it becomes the child's own spirit, which sustains him in all

hardships, giving him hope for the future, and the strength to create a good life for himself.

Whether or not we recognize consciously the full significance of that which is symbolically expressed through the image of Cinderella's asking for the twig, planting it, cultivating it with her tears and prayers, and finally through the little white bird alighting on it whenever Cinderella needs it, this feature of "Cinderella" touches us all, and we respond, at least preconsciously, to the meaning. It is a beautiful and effective image, even more meaningful and instructive to the child who is just beginning to internalize what his parents mean to him. It is as significant to boys as it is to girls because the internalized mother—or basic trust—is a crucially important mental phenomenon, whatever a person's sex. By eliminating the tree and replacing it with a fairy godmother who appears suddenly and unexpectedly out of nowhere, Perrault has robbed the story of some of its deepest meaning.

The Brothers Grimm's "Cinderella" conveys ever so subtly to the child that, miserable as he may feel at the moment—because of sibling rivalry or any other reason—by sublimating his misery and sorrow, as Cinderella does by planting and cultivating the tree with her emotions, the child on his very own can arrange things so that his life in the world will also become a good one.

In the Brothers Grimm's "Cinderella," right after we have been told about the tree and the little white bird that fulfills Cinderella's wishes, we learn that the king has ordered a three-day festival so that his son may select a bride. Cinderella begs to be permitted to go. Despite denials, she persists in her entreaties. Finally the stepmother tells her that she has emptied a dish of lentils into the ashes; if Cinderella picks them out within two hours, she may go to the ball.

This is one of the seemingly impossible tasks which fairy-tale heroes have to perform. In Eastern versions of "Cinderella," she has to do some spinning; in some Western stories, sift grain.[93] On the surface, this is another example of her being abused. But when this demand is made of Cinderella—after the radical change in her fortunes, since she has gained a magic helper in the white bird which fulfills her wishes, and just before she is to go to the ball—this suggests that hard and difficult tasks must be performed well before Cinderella is worthy of a happy ending. Thanks to the birds she calls in as helpers, Cinderella is able to finish the sorting task, only to have the stepmother repeat her demand with doubly increased difficulties: the second time she is required to sort two dishes of lentils spilled into the ashes and

to do so in only one hour. Again with the aid of the birds Cinderella succeeds, but the stepmother still will not allow her to go to the ball, despite her two promises to do so.

The task demanded of Cinderella seems senseless: why drop lentils into the ashes only to have them picked out again? The stepmother is convinced that this is impossible, degrading, meaningless. But Cinderella knows that something good can be gained from whatever one does if one is able to endow it with meaning, even from stirring around in the ashes. This detail of the story encourages the child in his conviction that to dwell in lowly places—to play in and with dirt—can be of great value, if one knows how to extract it. Cinderella calls on the birds to help her, telling them to pick out the good lentils and put them in the pot, but to do away with the bad ones by eating them.

The stepmother's falseness in twice reneging on her promises is thus opposed to Cinderella's recognition that what is needed is a sorting out of good from evil. After Cinderella has spontaneously turned the task into a moral problem of good versus bad, and eliminated the bad, she proceeds to her mother's grave and asks the tree to "scatter gold and silver" over her. The bird throws down a gold-and-silver dress and, the first and second times, slippers decorated with silk and silver. The last time the slippers are made of gold.

In Perrault's tale, too, Cinderella has to accomplish a task before she can go to the ball. After the fairy godmother has told Cinderella that she is to go, she orders Cinderella to bring her a pumpkin from the garden. Although Cinderella does not understand the meaning of this, she does as she is told. It is the godmother, and not Cinderella, who scoops out the pumpkin and turns it into a coach. Then the godmother tells Cinderella to open a mousetrap, and she changes the six mice found there into horses. One rat is similarly transformed into a coachman. Finally Cinderella is to fetch six lizards, which become footmen. Her rags are made into beautiful clothes, and she is given glass slippers. So equipped, Cinderella leaves for the ball, but not before she is ordered to return before midnight because at that moment all will return to its original form.

The glass slippers, the pumpkin made into a coach—these are all Perrault's invention: there is no trace of them in any other version but his and those dependent on his. Marc Soriano sees in these details Perrault's mockery of the hearer who takes the story seriously, but also the irony with which he treats his subject: if Cin-

derella can be changed into the most beautiful princess, then mice and a rat can become horses and a coachman.*

Irony is in part the result of unconscious thoughts; and the wide acceptance of Perrault's details can be explained only by their touching a responsive chord in the hearer. The obligation to hold on to the best in one's past; to cultivate one's sense of morality; to remain true to one's values despite adversity; not to permit oneself to be defeated by the malice or nastiness of others—all this is so obvious in "Cinderella" that Perrault cannot have remained untouched by it. The conclusion must be that he deliberately defends himself against it. His irony invalidates the demand inherent in the story that we transform ourselves through an inner process. It ridicules the idea that striving for the highest goals permits us to transcend the lowly conditions of our external existence.[95] Perrault reduces "Cinderella" to a nice fantasy with no implications for ourselves. And this is how many people want to look at the story, which accounts for the widespread acceptance of his version of it.

While this may explain Perrault's manner of reworking the old tale, it does not account for the specific details which he invented according to both his conscious and his unconscious understanding of the story, and which we accept for the same reason. Contrary to all versions in which Cinderella is forced to live among the ashes, only Perrault tells that she *chose* to do so. This makes her the prepubertal child who has not yet repressed her desire to get herself good and dirty; and who has not yet acquired an aversion to furtive little animals like rats, mice, and lizards; and who scoops out a pumpkin and imagines it to be a beautiful coach. Mice and rats inhabit dark and dirty corners and steal food, all things the child also likes to do. Unconsciously, they also arouse associations to the phallus, indicating the coming of sexual interest and maturation. Irrespective of their phallic connotations, to transform such lowly if not disgusting animals into horses, coachman, and footmen represents a sublimation. So this detail seems correct on at least two levels: it signifies the company Cinderella kept while living among the ashes in her lowly stage, if not also her phallic interests; and it seems fitting that such interests must be sublimated as she matures—i.e., prepares herself for the prince.

Perrault's rendering makes his "Cinderella" more acceptable to our

*As for the lizards, Soriano reminds us of the French expression "lazy as a lizard," which explains why Perrault may have chosen these animals to be transformed into footmen, whose laziness was a matter for jokes.[94]

conscious and unconscious understanding of what the story is all about. Consciously we are willing to accept the irony which reduces the story to a nice fantasy without serious content, since it relieves us of the otherwise implied obligation to come to terms with the problem of sibling rivalry, and of the task of internalizing our early objects and living up to their moral requirements. Unconsciously the details he adds seem convincing on the basis of our own buried childhood experiences, since they appear to indicate that to become mature we must transform and sublimate our early fascination with instinctual behavior, whether it is the attraction of dirt or of phallic objects.

Perrault's Cinderella, who goes to the ball in a coach driven by six horses attended by six footmen—as if the ball would take place at Louis XIV's Versailles—must depart before midnight, when she will be returned to her mean attire. On the third night, however, she fails to pay sufficient attention to the passage of time, and in her hurry to get away before the magic spell expires, she loses one of her glass slippers. "The guards at the gates of the palace were asked if they had not seen a princess leaving; they said that they had seen nobody leave but a young girl very badly dressed, who looked much more like a country wench than a lady."

In the Brothers Grimm's story Cinderella can stay at the ball as long as she likes. When she leaves, she does so for a purpose and not because she must. When she does leave, the prince tries to accompany her, but she slips away, hiding from him on the first night. "The son of the king waited till the father came and told him that a strange girl had jumped into the dovecote. The old man thought, 'Could it be Aschenputtel?' and they had to bring him an ax and a pick so that he could break the dovecote into two; but nobody was in it." In the meantime Cinderella has made her escape and changed back into her dirty clothes. The following day, things repeat themselves, with the exception that Cinderella hides in a pear tree. On the third day the prince has the stairs coated with pitch, so when Cinderella again slips away, one of her slippers gets stuck there.

There are variations of the story in which Cinderella takes the initiative to be recognized, not waiting passively. In one of them the prince gives her a ring, which she bakes into a cake served to him; he will marry no other girl than the one on whose finger the ring fits.

Why does Cinderella go three times to the ball to meet the prince, only to run away from him to return to her degraded position? As it often does, the three-times-repeated behavior reflects the child's position in regard to his parents, and his reaching for his true selfhood as

he works through his early conviction that he is the most important element in the threesome, and his later fear that he is the least significant. True selfhood is gained not through the three repetitions, but through something else that these lead up to—the fitting of the shoe.

On the overt level, Cinderella's evading the prince tells that she wants to be chosen for the person she really is, and not for her splendid appearance. Only if her lover has seen her in her degraded state and still desires her will she be his. But, for that, a single appearance and losing the slipper the first night would do. On a deeper level, repeating her visits to the ball symbolizes the ambivalence of the young girl who wants to commit herself personally and sexually, and at the same time is afraid to do so. It is an ambivalence which is also reflected in the father, who wonders whether the beautiful girl is his daughter Cinderella, but does not trust his feelings. The prince, as if recognizing that he cannot win Cinderella as long as she remains emotionally tied to her father in an oedipal relation, does not pursue her himself, but asks the father to do it for him. Only if the father first indicates his readiness to release his daughter from her ties to him can she feel good about transferring her heterosexual love from its immature object (the father) to its mature object—her future husband. The father's demolishing Cinderella's hiding places—chopping down the dovecote and the pear tree—shows his readiness to hand her over to the prince. But his efforts do not have the desired result.

On a quite different level, the dovecote and the pear tree stand for the magic objects which have sustained Cinderella up to this point. The first is the living place of the helpful birds which sorted out the lentils for Cinderella—substitutes for the white bird on the tree which provided her with her pretty clothes, including the fateful slippers. And the pear tree reminds us of that other tree which had grown on the mother's grave. Cinderella must relinquish her belief in and reliance on the help of magic objects if she is to live well in the world of reality. The father seems to understand this, and so he cuts down her hiding places: no more hiding among the ashes, but also no more seeking refuge from reality in magic places. From now on Cinderella will exist neither far below her true status nor way above it.

Cox, following Jacob Grimm, mentions the ancient German custom of the groom giving a shoe to his bride as sign of betrothal.[96] But this does not explain why the fit of a golden shoe decides who is the right bride in the ancient Chinese tale, and in Perrault's tale, a glass slipper. For the test to work, the shoe must be a slipper that does not stretch, or it would fit some other girl, such as the stepsisters. Perrault's sub-

tlety is shown in his saying the shoe was made of glass, a material that does not stretch, is extremely brittle and easily broken.

A tiny receptacle into which some part of the body can slip and fit tightly can be seen as a symbol of the vagina. Something that is brittle and must not be stretched because it would break reminds us of the hymen; and something that is easily lost at the end of a ball when one's lover tries to keep his hold on his beloved seems an appropriate image for virginity, particularly when the male sets a trap—the pitch on the stairs—to catch her. Cinderella's running away from this situation could be seen as her effort to protect her virginity.

The godmother's order that Cinderella must be home by a certain hour or things will go very wrong, in Perrault's story, is similar to the parent's request that his daughter must not stay out too late at night because of his fear of what may happen if she does. The many "Cinderella" stories in which she flees to evade being ravished by an "unnatural" father support the notion that her running away from the ball is motivated by the wish to protect herself against being violated, or carried away by her own desires. It also forces the prince to seek her in her father's house, thus paralleling the groom coming to ask for the hand of his bride. While in Perrault's "Cinderella" a gentleman of the court tries the slipper on, and in the Brothers Grimm's tale the prince only hands it to Cinderella and she herself puts it on her foot, in many stories it is the prince who slips the shoe on. This might be likened to the groom's putting the ring on the finger of the bride as an important part of the marriage ceremony, a symbol of their being tied together henceforth.

All this is easily understood. On hearing the story one senses that the fitting on of the slipper is a betrothal, and it is quite clear that Cinderella is a virginal bride. Every child knows that marriage is connected with sex. In past times, when more children grew up close to animals, they knew that sex has something to do with the male putting his organ into the female, and the modern child is told as much by his parents. However, in view of the story's major topic, sibling rivalry, there are other possible symbolic meanings for the fitting of the precious slipper onto the appropriate foot.

Sibling rivalry is the topic of "Cinderella," as it is of many fairy tales. In these other fairy tales the rivalry nearly always exists among children of the same sex. But in real life, more often than not, the sharpest rivalry among the children of one family is between sister and brother.

The discrimination which females suffer when compared with

males is an age-old story now being challenged. It would be strange if this discrimination did not also create jealousy and envy between sisters and brothers within the family. Psychoanalytic publications are full of examples of girls being envious of boys' sexual apparatus; the "penis envy" of the female has been a familiar concept for quite some time. Less well recognized is that this envy is by no means a one-way street; boys are also quite jealous of what girls possess: breasts, and the ability to bear children.[97]

Each sex is jealous of what the other has which it lacks, much though either sex may like and be proud of what belongs to it—be it status, social role, or sexual organs. While this can be readily observed and is undoubtedly a correct view of the matter, unfortunately it is not yet widely recognized and accepted. (To some degree this is due to early psychoanalysis' one-sidedly stressing the so-called penis envy of girls, which probably occurred because at that time most treatises were written by males who did not examine their own envy of females. This is somewhat paralleled today in writings of militantly proud females.)

"Cinderella," the story which more than any other fairy tale deals with the topic of sibling rivalry, would be strangely deficient if in some fashion it did not also give expression to the rivalry of boys and girls due to their physical differences. Behind this sexual envy lies sexual fear, the so-called "castration anxiety" that some part of one's anatomy is missing. *Overtly* "Cinderella" tells only about sibling rivalry of girls; but might there not be some *covert* allusions to these other, deeper-reaching, and much more repressed emotions?

While girls and boys suffer equally severely from "castration anxiety," the feelings they suffer are not the same. Both the terms "penis envy" and "castration anxiety" stress only one of many and complex psychological aspects of the phenomena they name. According to Freudian theory, the girl's castration complex centers on her imagining that originally all children had penises and that girls somehow lost theirs (possibly as punishment for misbehavior) and on the consequent hope that it may grow back. The boy's parallel anxiety is that since all girls lack penises, this can be explained only by their having lost them, and he fears the same thing may happen to him. The girl subject to castration anxiety uses many and varied defenses to protect her self-esteem from such imagined deficiency; among these are unconscious fantasies that she, too, has similar equipment.

To understand the unconscious thoughts and feelings which may have led to the invention of a beautiful, tiny slipper as a central feature of "Cinderella," and, more important, the unconscious re-

sponses to this symbol which make it so convincing that "Cinderella" is one of the best-loved tales, one must accept that many different, even contradictory psychological attitudes may have become connected with the shoe as a symbol.

A very strange incident which takes place in most versions of "Cinderella" is the stepsisters' mutilation of their feet to make them fit the tiny slipper. Although Perrault excluded this event from his story, according to Cox it is common to all "Cinderella" stories except those derived from Perrault and a few others. This incident may be viewed as a symbolic expression of some aspects of the female castration complex.

The sisters' devious foot-mutilation is the final barrier to the happy ending; it immediately precedes the prince's finding Cinderella. For the last time the stepsisters, with the active help of the stepmother, try to cheat Cinderella out of what rightly belongs to her. Trying to fit their feet into the shoe, the stepsisters mutilate them. In the Brothers Grimm's story the oldest stepsister cannot enter the shoe with her big toe. So her mother hands her a knife and tells her to cut off the toe, because once she is a queen, she will no longer need to walk. The daughter does as she is told, forces her foot into the shoe, and goes to the prince, who rides off with her. As they pass Cinderella's mother's grave and the hazel tree, two white pigeons sitting on it call, "Look, there is blood in the shoe: the shoe is too small; the right bride still sits at home." The prince looks at the shoe and sees blood oozing out. He returns the stepsister to her home. The other stepsister tries to put on the shoe, but her heel is too big. Again the mother tells her to cut it off, and the same sequence of events occurs. In other versions where there is only one impostor bride, she cuts off either her toe or her heel, or both. In "Rashin Coatie" it is the mother who performs the operation.

This episode reinforces the impression created previously of how gross the stepsisters are, proving that they stop at nothing to cheat Cinderella and gain their goals. Overtly the stepsisters' behavior contrasts them sharply with Cinderella, who does not wish to gain happiness through anything but her true self. She refuses to be chosen on the basis of an appearance created by magic, and arranges things so that the prince has to see her in her ragged clothes. The stepsisters rely on deception, and their falsehood leads to their mutilation—a topic which is taken up again at the story's end when two white birds pick out their eyes. But it is a detail of such extraordinary crudeness and cruelty that it must have been invented for some specific, al-

though probably unconscious reason. Self-mutilations are rare in fairy tales, as contrasted to mutilations by others, which are by no means infrequent as punishment or for some other reason.

When "Cinderella" was invented, the common stereotype contrasted the bigness of the male with the smallness of the female, and Cinderella's small feet would make her especially feminine. To have such big feet that they don't fit the slipper makes the stepsisters more masculine than Cinderella—therefore less desirable. Desperate to gain the prince, the stepsisters do not shy away from doing anything possible to make themselves into dainty females.

The stepsisters' efforts to trick the prince through self-mutilation are discovered by their bleeding. They tried to make themselves more female through cutting off a part of their body; bleeding is a consequence of it. They engaged in symbolic self-castration to prove their femininity; bleeding from the place on the body where this self-castration occurred may be another demonstration of their femininity, as it may stand for menstruation.

Whether or not self-mutilation or mutilation by the mother is an unconscious symbol of castration to get rid of an imagined penis; whether or not the bleeding is a symbol of menstruation, the story tells that the stepsisters' efforts do not succeed. The birds reveal the bleeding which shows that neither of the stepsisters is the right bride. Cinderella is the virginal bride; in the unconscious, the girl who does not yet menstruate is more clearly virginal than one who already does. And the girl who permits her bleeding to be seen, particularly by a man—as the stepsisters with their bleeding feet cannot help doing—is not only coarse, but certainly less virginal than one who does not bleed. Thus it seems that this episode, on another level of unconscious understanding, contrasts the virginity of Cinderella with the absence of it in the stepsisters.

The slipper, a central feature of the "Cinderella" story and that which decides her fate, is a most complex symbol. It was probably invented out of a variety of somewhat contradictory unconscious thoughts, and hence evokes a diversity of unconscious reponses in the hearer.

To the conscious mind, an object such as a slipper is just that—while symbolically in the unconscious it may in this story represent the vagina, or ideas connected with it. Fairy tales proceed on both a conscious and an unconscious level, which makes them more artistic, captivating, and convincing. Thus the objects used in them must be appropriate on the overt, conscious level while also calling forth as-

sociations quite different from their overt significance. The tiny slipper and the foot that fits it, and another mutilated one that does not, are images which make good sense to our conscious mind.

In "Cinderella" the pretty, tiny foot exercises an unconscious sexual appeal, but in conjunction with a beautiful, precious (for example, golden) slipper into which the foot fits snugly. This element of the "Cinderella" story also exists all by itself as a complete fairy tale, one reported by Strabo, much older than the ancient Chinese "Cinderella." This tale tells of an eagle that absconds with a sandal of the beautiful courtesan Rhodope, which it drops on the pharaoh. The pharaoh is so taken with the sandal that all of Egypt is searched for the original owner so that she may become his wife.[98] This story suggests, that in ancient Egypt, as today, in certain circumstances the female slipper, as a symbol for that which is most desirable in a woman, arouses love in the male for definite but deeply unconscious reasons.

Since for over two thousand years—as Strabo's story shows—all over the world in much loved stories the female slipper has been accepted as a fairy-tale solution to the problem of finding the right bride, there must be good reasons for it. The difficulty in analyzing the unconscious meaning of the slipper as a symbol for the vagina is that although both males and females respond to this symbolic meaning, they do not do so in the same ways.* This is the subtlety but also the complexity and ambiguity of this symbol, and why it makes a strong emotional appeal to both sexes, although for different reasons. This is hardly surprising since the vagina and what it stands for in the unconscious means something different to the male and to the female; and this is particularly so until such time as both have attained full personal and sexual maturity, which is rather late in life.

In the story the prince's selection of Cinderella as his bride is based on the slipper. If the basis of his choice had been her looks or personality or any other quality, he could never have been deceived by the stepsisters. But they fooled him to the degree that he was riding off

*A wide variety of folklore data supports the notion that the slipper can serve as a symbol for the vagina. Rooth, quoting Jameson, reports that among the Manchu a bride is expected to present gifts of slippers to her husband's brothers, who, since group marriage is practiced, become her sexual partners through her marriage. These slippers are ornamented with *"lien hua,"* which is a vulgar term for the female genitals.[99]

Jameson cites several instances of the slipper used as a sexual symbol in China, and Aigremont supplies examples of this from Europe and the East.[100]

first with one, then the other of them, as his bride. The birds had to tell him that neither was the right bride because blood was oozing out of her shoe. So it was not so much the fit of the slipper which decided who was the right bride, but rather that bleeding from the foot into the slipper indicated who were the wrong choices. This was something the prince seemed unable to observe on his own, although one would think it had to be quite visible. He recognized it only after it was forced on his attention.

The prince's inability to observe the blood in the shoe suggests another part of castration anxiety, that connected with bleeding in menstruation. The blood oozing out of the slipper is but another symbolic equation of slipper-vagina, but now with the vagina bleeding as in menstruation. The prince's remaining unaware of it suggests his need to defend himself against the anxieties this arouses in him.

Cinderella is the right bride because she frees the prince of these anxieties. Her foot slips easily into the beautiful slipper, which shows that something that is dainty can be hidden within it. She does not need to mutilate herself; she does not bleed from any part of her body. Her repeated withdrawal shows that, contrary to her sisters, she is not aggressive in her sexuality but waits patiently to be chosen. But once she is chosen, she is not at all reluctant. By putting the slipper on her foot and not waiting until the prince does it, she shows her initiative and her ability to arrange her own fate. The prince had great anxiety in respect to the stepsisters, so much so that he could not see what was going on. But he has great security with Cinderella. Since she can provide this security for him, this makes her the right bride for him.

But what about Cinderella, who is, after all, the heroine of the story? Since the prince cherishes her slipper, this tells her in symbolic form that he loves her femininity as represented by the symbol of the vagina. However Cinderella may have felt about dwelling among the ashes, she knew that a person who lives thus appears to others as being dirty and uncouth. There are females who feel this way about their sexuality, and others who fear that males feel this way about it. That is why Cinderella made sure that the prince saw her in this state also before he chose her. By handing her the slipper to put her foot into, the prince symbolically expresses that he accepts her the way she is, dirty and degraded.

Here we must remember that the golden shoe was borrowed from the bird which represents the spirit of the dead mother, which Cinderella had internalized and which sustained her in her trials and tribulations. The prince, by presenting the slipper to her, finally

makes the slipper and his kingdom truly hers. He symbolically offers her femininity in the form of the golden slipper-vagina: male acceptance of the vagina and love for the woman is the ultimate male validation of the desirability of her femininity. But nobody, not even a fairy-tale prince, can hand such acceptance to her—not even his love can do it. Only Cinderella herself can finally welcome her femininity, although she is helped by the prince's love. This is the deeper meaning of the story's telling that "she drew her foot out of the heavy wooden shoe and put it into the slipper, which fitted her to perfection."

At this moment, what had been a borrowed appearance of beauty while at the ball becomes Cinderella's true self; it is she who changes from the wooden shoe, which belongs to her existence among the ashes, into the golden one.

In the slipper ceremony, which signifies the betrothal of Cinderella and the prince, he selects her because in symbolic fashion she is the uncastrated woman who relieves him of his castration anxiety, which would interfere with a happy marital relationship. She selects him because he appreciates her in her "dirty" sexual aspects, lovingly accepts her vagina in the form of the slipper, and approves of her desire for a penis, symbolized by her tiny foot fitting within the slipper-vagina. That is why the prince brings the beautiful slipper to Cinderella and why she puts her tiny foot into it—only as she does so is she recognized as the right bride. But as she slips her foot into the slipper she asserts that she, too, will be active in their sexual relationship; she will do things, too. And she also gives the assurance that she is not and never was lacking in anything; she has everything that fits, as her foot snugly fits into the slipper.

A reflection on a universally accepted part of the wedding ceremony may lend support to this idea. The bride stretches out one of her fingers for the groom to slip a ring onto it. Pushing one finger through a circle made out of the thumb and index finger of the other hand is a vulgar expression for intercourse. But in the ring ceremony something entirely different is symbolically expressed. The ring, a symbol for the vagina, is given by the groom to his bride; she offers him in return her outstretched finger, so that he may complete the ritual.

Many unconscious thoughts are expressed in this ceremony. Through the ritual exchange of rings the male expresses his desire for, and acceptance of, the vagina—something about which the female may have worried—as well as of the wish she may have for a penis of

her own. By having the ring put onto her finger, the bride acknowledges that from now on, her husband to some degree will have possession of her vagina, and she of his penis; with it she will no longer feel deprived by not having one—which symbolizes the end of her castration anxiety; as his ended with his making his own, and wearing from then on, his wedding ring. The *golden* slipper that the prince hands to Cinderella to slip her foot into may be seen as but another form of this ritual, which we take so much for granted that we give little thought to its symbolic meaning, although it is with this act that the groom takes the bride for his wife.

"Cinderella" is the story of sibling rivalry and jealousy, and of how victory over them can be achieved. The greatest envy and jealousy are aroused by the sex characteristics which the one possesses and which the other lacks. Not just sibling rivalry but sexual rivalry, too, is integrated and transcended as the story of Cinderella ends. What started as utter deprivation because of jealousy ends in great happiness because of a love which understands the sources of this jealousy, accepts them, and in doing so eliminates them.

Cinderella receives from her prince that which she thought was lacking in her, as he assures her in symbolic form that she is not lacking in any respect, and that she will receive what she has wished to possess. The prince receives from Cinderella the assurance he needed most: that while all along she had a wish for a penis, she accepts that only he can satisfy it. It is an act which symbolizes that she was not castrated of her desires, and does not wish to castrate anybody; so he need not fear that this may happen to him. She receives from him what she needs most for herself; he receives from her what he needs most for himself. The slipper motif serves to pacify unconscious anxieties in the male, and to satisfy unconscious desires in the female. This permits both to find the most complete fulfillment in their sexual relation in marriage. By means of this motif, the story enlightens the hearer's unconscious about what is involved in sex and marriage.

The child whose unconscious responds to the hidden meaning of the story, whether girl or boy, will understand better what lies behind his jealous feelings and his anxiety that he may end up the deprived one. He also will gain some inkling of the irrational anxiety which may stand in his way to forming a happy sexual relation, and what is required to achieve such a relation. But the story also assures the child that, as the heroes of the story do, so will he be able to master his anxieties and, despite all trials, there will be a happy ending.

The happy ending would be incomplete without the punishment of the antagonists. But it is neither Cinderella nor the prince who inflicts the punishment. The birds, who had helped Cinderella to sort out good from bad by picking out the lentils, now complete the destruction which the stepsisters themselves had begun: they pick out the stepsisters' eyes. Being blinded is a symbolic statement of their blindness in thinking they could elevate themselves by degrading others; trusting their fate to outward appearances; most of all, believing that sexual happiness could be achieved by (self-)castration.

To probe into the unconscious significance of some of this best-loved fairy tale's features, the sexual connotations must be considered. In discussing them I fear I have gone against the poet's advice, "Tread softly because you tread on my dreams."[101] But dreams began to reveal their meaning and importance only when Freud dared probe into the manifold, often uncouth, and grossly sexual unconscious thoughts which are hidden behind apparently innocent surfaces. With Freud's influence, our dreams have become much more problematic to us—more upsetting and difficult to deal with. But they are also the royal road to the unconscious mind, and they permit us to form a new and richer view of ourselves and the nature of our humanity.

The child who enjoys "Cinderella" will respond mainly to one or another of the surface meanings most of the time. But at various moments in his development toward self-understanding, depending on what is problematic to him, the child's unconscious will be enlightened by one of the story's hidden meanings, indicated by some important detail.[102]

Overtly the story helps the child to accept sibling rivalry as a rather common fact of life and promises that he need not fear being destroyed by it; on the contrary, if these siblings were not so nasty to him, he could never triumph to the same degree at the end. Further, it tells the child that if he was once considered dirty and uncouth, this was a temporary stage with no adverse consequences for the future. There are also obvious moral lessons: that surface appearances tell nothing about the inner worth of a person; that if one is true to oneself, one wins out over those who pretend to be what they are not; and that virtue will be rewarded, evil punished.

Openly stated, but not as readily recognized, are the lessons that to develop one's personality to the fullest, one must be able to do hard work and be able to separate good from evil, as in the sorting of the lentils. Even out of lowly matter like ashes, things of great value can be gained, if one knows how to do it.

Just below the surface and quite accessible to the child's conscious mind is the importance of keeping faith with what was good in one's past, of keeping alive basic trust gained from the relation to the good mother. This faith permits achieving what is best in life; and if one finds one's way back to the values of the good mother, these help win the victory.

Regarding a child's relation not just to his mother but to his parents in general, "Cinderella" offers both parents and children important insights which no other well-known fairy tale expresses as well. These insights are of such significance that their consideration has been saved for the end of this discussion. Being so clearly inherent in the story that they cannot fail to make an impression, these messages make a greater impact just because we do not consciously spell out to ourselves what they are. Without our "knowing" it, the lessons become part of our understanding about life when we make this fairy tale part of ourselves.

In no other popular fairy tale are the good and the bad mother put so clearly into juxtaposition. Even in "Snow White," which tells about one of the worst stepmothers, the stepmother does not set impossible tasks for her daughter, or demand hard work of her. Nor does she reappear at the end in the form of the original good mother, to arrange for her child's happiness. But hard work and seemingly impossible tasks are what Cinderella's stepmother requires of her. On the overt level the story tells all about how Cinderella finds her prince *despite* what the stepmother does to her. But in the unconscious, particularly for the young child, "despite" is often tantamount to "because of."

Without having first been forced to become a "Cinderella," the heroine would never have become the bride of the prince; the story makes this quite obvious. In order to achieve personal identity and gain self-realization on the highest level, the story tells us, both are needed: the original good parents, and later the "step"-parents who seem to demand "cruelly" and "insensitively." The two together make up the "Cinderella" story. If the good mother did not for a time turn into the evil stepmother, there would be no impetus to develop a separate self, to discover the difference between good and evil, develop initiative and self-determination. Witness the fact that the stepsisters, to whom the stepmother remains the good mother throughout the story, never achieve any of this; they remain empty shells. When the slipper does not fit the stepsisters, it is not they who take action, but their mother who tells them to. All this is given

emphasis by the sisters' remaining blind—i.e., insensitive—for the rest of their lives, a symbol, but also the logical consequence of having failed to develop a personality of their own.

For the possibility of a development toward individuation to exist, a firm basis is needed—"basic trust," which we can gain only from the relationship between the infant and the good parents. But for the process of individuation to become possible and necessary—and unless it becomes unavoidable we do not engage in it, for it is much too painful—the good parents have to appear for a period as bad, persecuting ones who send the child out to wander for years in his personal desert, demanding seemingly "without respite" and without consideration for the child's comfort. But if the child responds to these hardships by developing his self in an independent way, then as if by miracle the good parents reappear. This is similar to the parent who does not make any sense to his adolescent child until after the adolescent has achieved maturity.

"Cinderella" sets forth the steps in personality development required to reach self-fulfillment, and presents them in fairy-tale fashion so that every person can understand what is required of him to become a full human being. This is hardly surprising, since the fairy tale, as I have tried to show throughout this book, represents extremely well the workings of our psyche: what our psychological problems are, and how these can best be mastered. Erikson, in his model of the human life-cycle, suggests that the ideal human being develops through what he calls "phase-specific psychosocial crises" if he achieves the ideal goals of each phase in succession. These crises in their sequence are: First, basic trust—represented by Cinderella's experience with the original good mother, and what this firmly implanted in her personality. Second, autonomy—as Cinderella accepts her unique role and makes the best of it. Third, initiative—Cinderella develops this as she plants the twig and makes it grow with the expression of her personal feelings, tears and prayers. Fourth, industry—represented by Cinderella's hard labors, such as sorting out the lentils. Fifth, identity—Cinderella escapes from the ball, hides in the dovecote and tree, and insists that the prince see and accept her in her negative identity as "Cinderella" before she assumes her positive identity as his bride, because any true identity has its negative as well as its positive aspects. According to Erikson's scheme, having ideally solved these psychosocial crises by having achieved the personality attributes just enumerated, one becomes ready for true intimacy with the other.[103]

The difference between what happens to the stepsisters, who remain tied to their "good parents" without inner development, and the hardships and significant developments Cinderella has to undergo when her original good parents are replaced by step-parents, permits every child and parent to understand that, in the child's best interests, for a time he needs to see even the best of parents as rejecting and demanding "step"-parents. If "Cinderella" makes an impression on parents, it can help them accept that as an inescapable step in their child's development toward true maturity, they must seem for a time to have turned into bad parents. The story also tells that when the child has attained his true identity, the good parents will be resuscitated in his mind, prove much more powerful, and replace permanently the image of the bad parents.

Thus, "Cinderella" offers parents much-needed comfort, for it can teach them why and for what good purposes they are seen temporarily in a bad light by their child. The child learns from "Cinderella" that to gain his kingdom he must be ready to undergo a "Cinderella" existence for a time, not just in regard to the hardships this entails, but also in regard to the difficult tasks he must master on his own initiative. Depending on the child's stage of psychological development, this kingdom which Cinderella achieves will be one either of unlimited gratification or of individuality and unique personal achievement.

Unconsciously, children and adults also respond to the other assurances "Cinderella" offers: that despite the seemingly devastating oedipal conflicts which caused Cinderella's dejected state, the disappointment in the parent of the other sex and the good mother turned stepmother, Cinderella will have a good life, even a better one than her parents. Further, the story tells that even castration anxiety is only a figment of the child's anxious imagination: in a good marriage everyone will find the sexual fulfillment even of what seemed impossible dreams: he will gain a golden vagina, she a temporary penis.

"Cinderella" guides the child from his greatest disappointments—oedipal disillusionment, castration anxiety, low opinion of himself because of the imagined low opinion of others—toward developing his autonomy, becoming industrious, and gaining a positive identity of his own. Cinderella, at the story's end, is indeed ready for a happy marriage. But does she love the prince? Nowhere does the story say so. It takes Cinderella up to the moment of engagement as the prince hands her the golden slipper, which might as well be the golden wedding ring (as indeed it is a ring in some "Cinderella" stories).[104]

But what else must Cinderella learn? What other experiences are needed to show the child what it means to be truly in love? The answer to this question is provided in the last cycle of stories we shall consider in this book, that of the animal groom.

THE ANIMAL-GROOM CYCLE OF FAIRY TALES

THE STRUGGLE FOR MATURITY

Snow White is carried off by the prince, inert in her coffin; it is by chance that she coughs up the poisonous piece of apple stuck in her throat and thus comes back to life. Sleeping Beauty awakens only because her lover kisses her. Cinderella's time of degradation ends when the slipper fits her. In each of these stories—as in so many others—the rescuer demonstrates his love for his future bride in some form. We are left in the dark about the feelings of the heroines, however. The way the Brothers Grimm tell these stories, we hear nothing about Cinderella being in love, although we may draw some conclusions from the fact that she goes to the ball three times to meet her prince. About Sleeping Beauty's feelings we learn only that she looks "in a friendly fashion" at the man who frees her from her enchantment. Similarly, all we are told is that Snow White "felt friendly" toward the man who brought her back to life. It seems as if these stories deliberately avoid stating that the heroines are in love; one gets the impression that even fairy tales put little stock in love at first sight. Instead, they suggest that much more is involved in loving than being awakened or chosen by some prince.

The rescuers fall in love with these heroines because of their beauty, which symbolizes their perfection. Being in love, the rescuers have to become active and prove that they are worthy of the woman they love—something quite different from the heroine's passive acceptance of being loved. In "Snow White" the prince declares he cannot live without Snow White, he offers the dwarfs whatever they want for her, and is finally permitted to carry her off. In penetrating the wall of thorns to reach Sleeping Beauty, her suitor risks his life. The prince in "Cinderella" devises an ingenious scheme to trap her,

From Cap to Cloak: The Evolution of “Little Red Riding Hood” from Oral Tale to Film

By

Tina-Louise Reid

Submitted to the graduate degree program in Film and Media Studies and the Graduate Faculty of the University of Kansas in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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From Cap to Cloak: The Evolution of “Little Red Riding Hood” from Oral Tale to Film

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Abstract

As co-written with scholar and storyteller Angela Carter, Neil Jordan's *The Company of Wolves* (1984) represents a unique case of adaptation as it radically revises the figure of "Little Red Riding Hood." *The Company of Wolves* transforms the pervasive myth of coming-of-age folklore by stimulating hallucinatory visions embedded in a structure effectively simulating the unconscious logic of dream. This paper investigates the evolution of the mythos in the original Little Red Riding Hood fairy tale, its progression and eventual reworking in Carter's literary and filmic takes, as she shifts the focus from the frightened, naïve girl clad in red, reliant on male heroes to the sexually awakened, self-reliant young woman in a crimson cape. To make the texts transparent, this essay analyses *The Company of Wolves* and its sources through the lenses of adaptation theories including those by George Bluestone and Sarah Cardwell whilst exploring Angela Carter's relationship to fairy tale as chronicled by Jack Zipes. The mechanisms and symbols of the dream imagery manifested in *The Company of Wolves* distinguish Carter's and Jordan's feverish brainchild as an enticingly instructive exemplar of rendering unconscious desires visible and visceral on celluloid.

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Neil Jordan's *The Company of Wolves* (1984) represents a unique case of adaptation. As co-written with scholar and storyteller Angela Carter, this film radically revises the figure of "Little Red Riding Hood" by drawing from Carter's fairy tales featured in her short story collection The Bloody Chamber. In addition to the multiple layers of literary reference stemming from 17th century French fairy tale author Charles Perrault via Carter, *The Company of Wolves* translates the pervasive myth of coming-of-age folklore by stimulating hallucinatory visions embedded in a structure effectively simulating the unconscious logic of dream. This paper investigates the evolution of the mythos in the original fairy tales, its progression and eventual reformulation in Carter's literary and filmic takes, as she shifts the focus from the frightened, naïve girl clad in red, reliant on male heroes to the sexually awakened, self-reliant young woman in a crimson cape as primarily illuminated by fairy tale expert Jack Zipes. To make the texts transparent, this essay analyses *The Company of Wolves* and its sources through the lenses of adaptation theories whilst exploring Angela Carter's relationship to fairy tale. The mechanisms and symbols of the dream imagery manifested in *The Company of Wolves* distinguish Carter's and Jordan's feverish brainchild as an enticingly instructive exemplar of rendering unconscious desires visible and visceral on celluloid, which continue to shape the visions of writers and filmmakers to this very day as most clearly evidenced in Catherine Hardwicke's *Red Riding Hood* (2011).

An Oral Her-story

Before examining the permutation of Little Red Riding Hood presented in *The Company of Wolves,* our exploration benefits from tracing the progression of this folk tale figure. Carole Zucker observes that various oral renditions of Little Red Riding Hood

exist in Egyptian, Greek, Roman, Celtic, Teutonic and American Indian cultures. “In all the early versions of the tale, LRRH [Little Red Riding Hood] outsmarts the wolf in a variety of clever moves, and escapes” (Zucker p. 1).

As similarly recounted by Terry Windling, contemporary artist and editor of fairy tale collections for adults, the heroine of “The Grandmother’s Tale” - the earlier, oral version of “Little Red Riding Hood” that preceded yet influenced Charles Perrault’s well-known and beloved 1697 published version - looks and acts a bit different from the Red Riding Hood to which contemporary readers are accustomed (Windling p. 1). Fairy-tale scholar Jack Zipes presents French folklorist Paul Delarue’s recounting of the oral tale as follows:

The Story of the Grandmother

> There was a woman who had made some bread. She said to her daughter: “Go carry this hot loaf and bottle of milk to your granny.”
> So the little girl departed. At the crossway she met bzou, the werewolf, who said to her: “Where are you going?”
> “I’m taking this hot loaf and a bottle of milk to my granny.”
> “What path are you taking,” said the werewolf, “the path of needles or the path of pins?”
> “The path of needles,” the little girl said.
> “All right, then I’ll take the path of pins.”
> The little girl entertained herself by gathering needles. Meanwhile the werewolf arrived at the grandmother’s house, killed her, put some of her meat in the cupboard and a bottle of her blood on the shelf. The little girl arrived and knocked at the door.
> “Push the door,” said the werewolf, “It’s barred by a piece of wet straw.”
> “Good day, Granny. I’ve brought you a hot loaf of bread and a bottle of milk.”
> “Put it in the cupboard, my child. Take some of the meat which is inside and the bottle of wine on the shelf.”
> After she had eaten, there was a little cat which said: “Phooey! ... A slut is she who eats the flesh and drinks the blood of her granny.”
> “Undress yourself, my child,” the werewolf said, “and come lie down beside me.”
> “Where should I put my apron?”
> “Throw it into the fire, my child, you won’t be needing it anymore.”

> And each time she asked where she should put all her other clothes, the bodice, the dress, the petticoat, and the long stocking, the wolf responded: "Throw them into the fire, my child, you won't be needing them anymore."
> When she laid herself down in the bed, the little girl said:
> "Oh, Granny, how hairy you are!"
> "The better to keep myself warm, my child!"
> "Oh, Granny, what big nails you have!"
> "The better to scratch me with, my child!"
> Oh, Granny, what big shoulders you have!"
> "The better to carry the firewood, my child!"
> "Oh, Granny, what big nostrils you have!"
> "The better to snuff my tobacco with, my child!"
> "Oh, Granny, what a big mouth you have!"
> "The better to eat you with, my child!"
> "Oh, Granny, I've got to go badly. Let me go outside."
> "Do it in bed, my child!"
> "Oh, no, Granny, I want to go outside."
> "All right, but make it quick."
> The werewolf attached a woolen rope to her foot and let her go outside. When the little girl was outside, she tied the end of the rope to a plum tree in the courtyard. The werewolf became impatient and said: "Are you making a load out there? Are you making a load?" When he realized that nobody was answering him, he jumped out of bed and saw that the little girl had escaped. He followed her but arrived at her house just at the moment she entered (Zipes, *Stick* pp. 33-34).

Throughout his brilliant academic career specializing in the cultural evolution of fairy tale, American scholar Jack Zipes has applied numerous approaches in examining fairy tales, especially all of the oral and literary variations of "Little Red Riding Hood." With his recent memetic study (the concept of the meme as coined by British evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins as now applied to explain the persistence of cultural motifs), Zipes identifies elements from ancient world tales that undeniably informed the following, canonical Little Red Riding Hood motifs: a girl clad in red; a forest encounter with a wolf/werewolf or ogre; the grandmother's murder; the predator's

decapitation or disembowelment; the story's end with a rape or a rescue (Zipes, *Stick,* p. 29). As Zipes correctly denotes, these motifs are not contemporary nor are they unique to the era in which Perrault or the Grimms were writing. These themes also occur in other times, places, societies and genres. Zipes substantiates this claim by quoting from Graham Anderson's *Fairy Tale in the Ancient World*:

> [Anderson] demonstrates that there were numerous tales, references, and allusions to these motifs in antiquity: "It seems clear enough that, despite the absence of a name for the heroine in Pausanias' story of Euthymus and Lykas, we do have one good clear 'take' of the traditional Red Riding Hood in antiquity; and a whole dossier of other partly converging hints surrounding a girl with a 'flame-red' name and associations; the circumstantial evidence of a 'Hercales and Pyrrha' version is likewise strong. The available material offers us two things: the skeleton of a story in which a child, male or female, is threatened, raped or eaten by a figure with wolf or ogre associations, then disgorged or otherwise reconstituted with or without the substitution of a stone, while the wolf-figure is drowned or killed, and a 'flame-girl' (in whatever sense) survives the drowning to see new life brought from stones. The tally of Red Riding Hood tales is quite impressive" (Zipes, *Stick,* p. 29).

Antiquated scholastic prejudices against fairy and folk tales deeming them as lesser forms of literature have persisted throughout western culture. As indicated by Zipes but not fully clarified by him, contemporary classists and folklorists have eschewed looking at the connection between the fairy tale form and Greco-Roman literature and lore. Since this genesis remains unclear, looking at pervasive patterns and memes has opened up the study and fairy tale interpretation in expansive critical and historical ways. Anderson highlights the cross-culturally recurring motif of characters swallowed by great fish, which figures prominently in a myriad of stories to show that societies will exalt such a remarkable tale to the deserving status of being committed to cultural memory either in oral or written form (Zipes, *Stick,* pp. 29-30). By accepting this premise, Zipes

further explains Anderson's hypothesis of the "widespread diffusion of folktale," a process that has lead to numerous versions replete with deviances, misrecollections, corrections and variations. Correctly, he stresses that tales and their reinventions will not be transmitted in identical forms as societies progress. Another lingering fantasy first perpetuated by nineteenth-century proto-anthropology (that modern scholars seek to dispel) lies in the belief that oral storytellers merely interchanged motifs to generate new stories based on the finite number of motifs that appear to be shared by popular tales. Certainly, tales and their variations at times converged or became confused. Borrowed motifs and hybrid tales exist yet Zipes argues that this is a marginal occurrence in tale diffusion. As one looks at international tale-types, it is obvious that initial integrity and inner logic remains. Tales told were eventually written down with the most memorable motifs communicated in concrete form to guarantee their survival (Zipes, *Stick*, p. 30).

As Zipes continually contends in The Trials and Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood and all of his subsequent reworkings in newer essays, "Little Red Riding Hood" is a rape tale, one in which the heroine survives or dies after her violation – a cautionary tale about dealing with predatory males in animalistic form. Zipes traces the origin of this literary fairy tale to violent male sexual fantasies about women. The placing of responsibility or blame for Little Red's fate in the tale is where the contradictions lie resulting in conflicting versions. Primarily, Zipes illustrates the transformation of the folk tale in oral form from a recounting of a young woman's social initiation into the literary versions by Charles Perrault and the Grimm Brothers into a rape narrative that places the blame on the heroine for her own attack. "Such a radical literary transformation is highly significant because the male-cultivated literary versions became dominant in both the oral

and literary traditions of nations such as Germany, France, Great Britain, and the United States, nations that together exercise cultural hegemony in the West. Indeed, the Perrault and Grimm versions became so crucial in the socialization process of these countries that they generated a literary discourse about sexual roles and behavior, a discourse whose fascinating antagonistic perspective shed light on different phases of social and cultural change" (Zipes, *Stick*, p. 28).

Zipes further examines Little Red Riding Hood's linguistic and memetic form as related to post-Darwinian evolutionary theories about instincts, adaptation and survival to determine exactly why it still resounds in popular culture. He posits that within canonical fairy tale motifs, a germ unites them, contributing to the memetic appeal as a tale evolves and is disseminated. In the case of "Little Red Riding Hood," Zipes considers this continually appropriated germ at the center of its discursive form to be the rape, violation and devouring of a young boy or girl (Zipes, *Stick*, pp. 28, 32). In the desire to make a tale their own, storytellers and writers created variants of "Little Red Riding Hood" as mental representations that ultimately went public. Ultimately, the tropes became fixed with Charles Perrault's published 1697. Zipes considers these other versions as interventions in the tale's evolution. The perpetual interaction of primary [the core yet changeable form] and secondary [that which takes shape in the social sphere such as the literary genre] speech genres as delineated by Russian literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin explains the manner of fairy tale propagation. Once 17th century raconteurs and writers heard "Little Red Riding Hood," the tale underwent many reinscribings incorporating mythic and religious elements whilst communicated current regional, societal views involving gender roles, violation and survival (Zipes, *Stick*, pp. 32-33).

Needles and Pins

As Zipes aptly observes, the sympathies of the oral version of "Little Red Riding Hood" as represented by "The Story of the Grandmother" lie with the young peasant girl of an indeterminate age, who bravely adapts to intelligently deal with the hostile world surrounding her. The oral versions suggest a sewing community social ritual that determines if a young girl coming of age will be able to handle not only a needle but also the opposite sex (Zipes, *Stick*, p. 33). The focus on fashion and finery in Little Red Riding Hood has further significance and Yvonne Verdier sheds even more light on this initiation rite. As Verdier discovered, when the girl encounters the wolf along the way to visit her grandmother in one variation on the oral tale, he gives her the choices of taking the path of needles or pins. Before the Industrial Revolution, the majority of women's labor revolved around making cloth and clothes. Women sewed and spun yarn and yarns to pass the time. At puberty, girls apprenticed for one winter season with local seamstresses, symbolizing a girl's transformation from a child into a young woman. This time was not merely about learning a trade but earning refinement as in the gathering of pins. By the time the girls reached fifteen, they were allowed to go dancing and to accept pins from boys as they courted the girls; by throwing pins into the fountain, girls assured themselves a sweetheart (Windling p. 4). While pins marked the path of maidenhood, needles demarcated sexual maturity. Verdier keenly indicates, "…as for the needles, threaded through its eye, in the folklore of seamstresses it refers to an emphatically sexual symbolism. Prostitutes once wore needles on their sleeves to advertise their profession" (Windling p. 4).

Drawing further from Verdier's study, Zipes acknowledges that the earliest recognized 14th century oral version of Little Red Riding Hood serves not only as a warning tale but also as a celebration of a girl's maturation. Upon the onset of puberty, peasant girls from the French regional districts of the Loire, Nievre, Forez, Velay, and the Alps apprenticed in needlework. As the oral tale symbolizes self-assertion via conflict and education, the young girl replaces her grandmother by eating her flesh and drinking her blood. The grandmother's death in the folk tale represents the preservation of custom. As Verdier maintains:

> the tale effectively reveals the fact that women transmitted the physical capacity of the procreation among themselves, even though the radical character of this transmission illuminated the conflictual aspect, a rivalry which ends in physical elimination, the relationship of women among themselves concerning this matter. Classified the maturation of their bodies, women find themselves divided and unequal. Perhaps one can see here the principal source of the violence in their conflicts. There are a number of tales which develop this aspect of elimination in the relationships among women, whether they be among women of the same generation … or among women of different generations … Moreover, it is remarkable that each successful conquest of physiological capacity concerning the female destiny is marked in the tale by the acquisition of technique which is the equivalent in the stage of learning, and even in a certain order – the proper order – in the society: needlework for puberty, kitchen for the proper procreative function, flushing out for the hour of birth. All this knowledge and technique are in the hands of women in the traditional peasant society. These are the true 'cultural goods" which are opposed in the tale to the ways of "nature" (the wolf devours the grandmother in the flesh). This knowledge imparts the "domestic" vocation … a function which again underlines the autonomy and power of women in regard to their own destiny in this traditional peasant society (Zipes, *Trials,* p. 24).

The early published versions of "Little Red Riding Hood" have persisted in popularizing the cautionary thrust of the folk tale for naïve little girls yet the oral version extolled female initiative and maturity by featuring laundresses that assist the tale's

heroine escape whilst drowning the wolf [bzou] (Windling p. 1). Not only was this plot point lost in translation, but also other grizzly components such as cannibalization, degradation and urination did not appear in print. “The Grandmother’s Tale” details the girl unknowingly preparing her own granny for dinner, a striptease that the girl performs to distract the beast (suggesting his sexual hunger for flesh) as well as a ruse about needing to relieve herself outside that culminates in her fleeing to the river where the laundresses come to her rescue [also referring to her rite of passage as assisted by wise village women] (Windling p. 3).

Of course, in certain oral tale variations, Little Red does not always win her wager with the wolf. Although Delarue’s synthetic piecing together of “The Story of the Grandmother” may not be the exact form in which it was told at the time, the critical consensus of scholars and anthropologists verify that this oral form existed before Charles Perrault committed his version to writing in 1697, “making the tale memetically unforgettable” (Zipes, *Stick*, p. 35). With his sophisticated revision of the oral tale, he made “Little Red Riding Hood” the exemplar advocating the value of the proper Christian upbringing and adherence to societal decorum. Zipes proposes that Perrault injects his own fear of women and sexual desires into the written tale, reflecting similar male (mis)conceptions of his time that women desire seduction and domination. “In this regard, Perrault began a series of literary transformations that have caused nothing but trouble for the female object of male desire and have also reflected the crippling aspect of male desire itself” (Zipes, *Stick*, p. 35).

Local fashion trends of times in which the Red Riding Hood fairy tale was translated became woven into the narrative thread. Perrault clad his heroine in a

chaperon, a hood-like hair covering. The Brothers Grimm, after numerous revisions of their initial 1812 version strongly reminiscent of Perrault's tale, have their Little Red don the famous red cap in 1857. When their translated tale gained popularity in Victorian England, cloaks were all the rage thus transforming the apparel of Little Miss Hood into the iconic hooded cape (Windling p. 8). Perrault's red chaperon transforms the innocent yet resourceful peasant lass of the oral tale into a naïve and spoiled bourgeois girl with the tainted, carnal color red recalling the devil and heresy. In addition, Perrault makes several other changes to the oral tale including the race with the wolf to Granny's house that Little Red perhaps want to lose, even, as well as not being bright enough to escape the wolf through trickery. This results in her suffering the same fate as her grandmother. Salvation is not possible. Instead, Perrault simply offers an ironic moral in verse form warning little girls to beware of strangers lest they fall victim to the deserved consequences. From Perrault's point-of-view, sex is sinful and playful sexual relations outside of the institution of marriage is akin to rape, which results from the girl's irresponsibility (Zipes, *Stick*, pp. 35-36).

The 1812 Brothers Grimm version of "Little Red Riding Hood" was also based on an oral tale retold to them by a middle-class young woman of Huguenot descent. Their most significant contribution and alteration of the fairy tale involves the prominent and cautionary role of the mother warning Little Red to not stray from the path on her way through the woods. To lead her astray, the Grimm wolf literally entices our heroine to stop, smell the flowers and enjoy nature. During her distraction and rosebud gathering, the devilish wolf beats Red to her grandma's house. Granny and Little Red fare better as far as not being cannibalized or raped but still require saving by huntsman. "Only a

strange male figure can rescue a girl from herself and her lustful desires" (Zipes, *Stick*, pp. 36-37). Carole Zucker also illustrates that Perrault revised these fairy tales adding morals as well as sanitizing the references to cannibalism beyond the wolf eating the heroine's grandmother. Similarly, the later version by The Brothers Grimm directed at children removes the sexual threat by implementing the valiant huntsman to save the girl with the red cap (Zucker p. 1).

The Salon – Wolves in Baroque Finery

During the time of Louis XIV, a new breed of wolfish predator loomed at large. Charles Perrault set down his version of Red Riding Hood and other *contes de fees*, or fairy tales as they were christened, gained great acclaim in the literary salons. Many of the writers that mingled in the salon were indeed women. The salon offered a place where women and men could partake in intellectual conversation outside of the royal court confines (Windling p. 6). Neither is it so far-fetched to assume that the stories were made more genteel for mixed company nor that the warning about wolves in disguise were meant for the ladies interacting with the charming men at the salon. As Zipes attests, these aristocratic women developed the literary fairy tale as a sort of parlor game as a means to demonstrate their education, wit and conversational prowess. "In fact, the linguistic games often served as models for literary genres such as the occasional lyric or the serial novel. Both women and men participated in these games and were constantly challenged to invent new ones or to refine the games. Such challenges led the women, in particular, to improve the quality of their dialogues, remarks, and ideas about morals, manners, and education and at times to oppose male standards that have been set to govern their lives. The subject matter of the conversations consisted of literatures, mores,

taste, and etiquette, whereby the speakers all endeavored to portray ideal situations in the most effective oratorical style that would gradually have a major effect on literary forms" (Zipes, *Myth*, pp. 20-21).

Although it is not exactly clear when the literary fairy tale was designated as an acceptable game, it originated out of the "jeux d'esprit" in the salons towards the end of the 17th century. The female participants referred to folk tales and spontaneously interjected related motifs into their conversations as literary divertimenti for their listeners' amusement. In addition to being amusing, women were able to portray themselves and their own interests as well as represent and parade proper patrician manners with emphases placed on the oratorical rules demanding poise and formlessness. Ironically, these rules called for making the tale appear off-the-cuff whilst adhering to guidelines, valuing the embellishment, improvisation, and experimentation of recognized folk or literary motifs. "The procedures of telling a tale as 'bagatelle' (triviality) would work as follows: the narrator would be requested to think up a tale based on a particular motif; the adroitness of the narrator would be measured by the degree with which she/he was inventive and natural; the audience would respond politely with a compliment; then another member of the audience would be requested to tell a tale, not in direct competition with the other teller, but in order to continue the game and vary the possibilities for linguistic expression" (Zipes, *Myth*, pp. 21-22).

By the 1690s, the salon fairy tale was all the rage. Both female and male intellectual writers documented their tales in hopes of publishing their unique takes. "The most notable writers gathered in the salons or homes of Madame D'Aulnoy, Perrault, Madame de Murat, Mademoiselle L'Hérteir, or Mademoiselle de La Force, all of whom

were in some part responsible for the great mode of literary fairy tales that developed between 1697 and 1789 in France" (Zipes, *Myth,* p. 22). Interestingly, the French contemporary literary salon aesthetic produced oral tales and written stories markedly anticlassical in nature, especially in creative rebellion to Nicolas Boileau, the champion of Greco-Roman literature as the writing models. Since many of the fairy tale writers were women, a definite distinction exists between their tales and those composed by men. As salon expert Renate Baader correctly notes:

> While Perrault's bourgeois and male tales with happy ends had pledged themselves to a moral that called for Griseldis [a folk and literary figure found in written form in stories by Boccaccio, Chaucer and Petrarch; Griselda is bastion of wifely strength and dedication in obeisance to her regal yet brutal husband] to serve as a model for women, the women writers had to make an effort to defend the insights that had been gained in the past decades. Mlle Scudéry's novels and novellas stood as examples for them and taught them how to redeem their own wish reality in the fairy tales. They probably remembered how feminine faults had been revalorized by men and how the aristocratic women had responded to this in their self-portraits. Those aristocratic women have commonly refused to place themselves in the service of social mobility. Instead they put forward their demand for moral, intellectual, and psychological self-determination. As an analogy to this, the fairy tales of the women made it expected that the imagination in the tales was truly to be let loose in any kind of arbitrary way that had been considered a female danger up until that time. After the utopia of the "royaume de temdre," which had tied fairy-tale salvation of the sexes to a previous ascetic and enlightened practice of virtues and the guidance of feeling, there was now an unleashed imagination that could invent a fairy-tale ream and embellish it so that reason and will were set out of commission (Zipes, *Myth*, pp. 22-23).

Until the time of the salon, fairy tales for children did not exist in written form. It was still an oral tradition as governesses, servants and peers shared and embellished these tales with children. Literary fairy tales were utilized in the salon for men as means to express political dissatisfaction with the monarchy and for women as a method to conceive societal alternatives to the behaviors and indeed, attitudes that their male

counterparts prescribed. Ultimately, the aristocracy and haute bourgeoisie socially embraced this refined fairy-tale discourse. Although women were the initial writers, the tales mutated and introduced morals to upper class children, enforcing a civil, patriarchal code much to the detriment of women's newfound intellectual freedom within the salon (Zipes, *Myth*, 23-24).

The Perils and Trials of Werewolves

When the oral versions of Little Red Riding Hood ran rampant, actual wolves still posed real threats to European villagers. Angela Carter imbues her werewolf lore in The Bloody Chamber with this tenuous atmosphere to create an authentic sense of this perilous time, raising the stakes of horror. From the 15th to the 17th centuries, werewolf trials were held even for politically threatening men, not unlike the witch trials for women (Windling p. 5). Literary scholar Marianne Rumpf's research proves invaluable in documenting this disturbing practice as she reveals that the most prevalent European warning tales (Schreckmarchen or Warnmarchen) in the Middle Ages recounted child attacks in the woods by ogres, ogresses, man-eaters, forest wild people, werewolves or wolves. These stories sought to show the dangers of talking to strangers or admitting them into your house. "Rumpf argues that the original villain in French folklore was probably a werewolf, and that it was Perrault who transformed him into a simple, but ferocious, wolf" (Zipes, *Trials*, pp. 18-19). Not surprisingly, superstitious werewolf tales flourished in feudal period France.

During the time of the werewolf trials, men were charged with devouring children. The recorded cases number in the thousands to hundred of thousands. Culled from the files of historians Rudolph Leubuscher and Wilhelm Hertz, Rumpf details one

of the more infamous trials held in Besancon from December 1521 involving Pierre Bourgot and Michel Verdun. These men were convicted of having attacked and killed children as werewolves. “Bourgot described his transformation and feats in great detail. He admitted to having killed a seven-year-old boy with his wolf’s teeth and paws. However, he was chased away before he could eat his victim. Verdun admitted to having killed a small girl as she was gathering pears in a garden. However, he, too, was chased away before he could eat his victim. Four other attacks on small girls, which the two accused were supposed to have carried out, were mentioned in the same report…” (Zipes, *Trials*, pp. 19-20).

In France during the 1500s, People of every age were terrified to traverse the woods alone due to the fear of werewolf or wolf attacks. What proves most fascinating in Rumpf’s writing is the fact that the Little Red Riding Hood oral tales of the 19th and 20th centuries emanated from the regions where werewolf trials were held in the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries. Charles Perrault’s mother was raised in Touraine, where werewolf tales were pervasive due to the sensational case of Jacques Raollet. In 1598, Raollet was sentenced to death in Angers, Touraine, for transforming into a werewolf and killing children. After an appeal at the Paris Parliament, Raollet was deemed insane and committed to the Hospital Saint Germaine des Pres. When this trial occurred, Perrault’s parents or even his nursemaid might have witnessed and certainly have heard of the events (Zipes, *Trials*, p. 20).

Doré and the Wolf’s Seduction

In considering the significance of visual interpretation of fairy tale, it is helpful to turn again to another text by Jack Zipes. Gustave Doré (1832-1883) engravings that

illustrate *Little Red Riding Hood* are arguably the most famous and beloved images. He illustrated the 1862 edition of Perrault's fairy tales. Due to their striking nature, a myriad of editions used these same drawings, including Tom Hood's *A Fairy Realm* (1864) and Morris Hartmann's *Marchen nach Perrault* (1869). Doré's illustrations were well known in the West by the end of the 1800s, especially his iconic depiction of Little Red's encounter with the Big Bad Wolf. Other artists of his time and even today still envisage fairy tale tableaux in analogous ways (Zipes, *Prince*, p. 240).

Zipes applies semiotics to examine the connotations latent in Doré's illustrations. He identifies the striking features of Little Red and the Wolf as the signifiers and the concepts to which these signifiers refer as the signified to make sense of the overall sign of the image. As part of his strategy, Zipes reminds us that the signifiers that refer to each other within the image and to the text create a sensory impression. The way in which we as the reader or viewer choose to interpret the ultimate meaning of the patterns will be colored by our own conscious and unconscious reactions as well as the societal and historical context shaping the reception of sexuality. He reaffirms his point by quoting film theoretician Bill Nichols from *Ideology and the Image:* "Images are always particularized representations, a way of seeing is built in (since a way of seeing built them) and hence connotation is built in" (Zipes, *Prince*, p. 240).

Gustave Doré's version of Little Red Riding Hood's encounter with the Wolf

In focusing on Doré's illustration of Little Red Riding Hood's encounter with the Wolf in the forest, Zipes selects the following expressive aspects: "the longing if not seductive look of Little Red Riding Hood as she peers into the eyes of the wolf and her faint smile; the enormous size of the powerful wolf who looks down into the eyes of the girl in a non-threatening manner; the proximity of wolf and girl who appear to be touching and to be totally absorbed in an intimate *tete-a-tete*" (Zipes, *Prince*, p. 240). This image certainly informs Jordan's and Carter's later interpretations and filmic reenactment. Zipes intimates that we as viewers of this image act as a voyeuristic intruder upon a lover's rendezvous. Deeper meaning lies in this familiar image that is not as innocent as it might initially appear.

The signifiers indicate a scene of seduction. Zipes believes that Doré depicts mutual longing of the girl and wolf for each other. This viewer interprets their visual exchange more as mutual curiosity and identification. Since it is her face that we see in its entirety complete with coy glance, this image insinuates that the prime desire for the

enormous wolf is hers. His animalistic state epitomizes Little Red's libido and secret wish to be misled as well as the male sexual appetite that wants to dominate women by tempting them away from the righteous path:

> The erotic display in Doré's illustration indicates a transgression of society's rules of sexual behavior and sexuality while at the same time it confirms what we suppose to be true about both women and men: women want men to rape them; men are powerful but weak beasts who cannot help themselves when tempted by alluring female creatures. Since the sexes prey upon one another and cause their own destruction in nature as opposed to society, then another implicit message is that there can be no "true" love, certainly no Christian love, in sexual intercourse practised outside of the institution of marriage. Only when sexual behaviour is domestically ordered as in the person of the mother and the father at the beginning and end of the fairy tale can sex assume its "proper" reproductive function in society (Zipes, *Prince*, p. 242).

Interesting questions that Zipes raises concerning Doré's illustration are why Little Red is not afraid of the Big Bad Wolf and why she would stop to talk to the strangest of strangers. An intelligent peasant girl would have immediately fled. A proper bourgeois girl would have avoided consorting with such a beast. Nevertheless, the heroine seeks his acquaintance as his influential shadow hovers over her. This shadowy region is where Zipes insightfully investigates the ambivalence of desire. In her quest for self-discovery, Little Red Riding Hood equally desires and identifies with the other. By looking into the wolf's eyes, she sees one possible reflection of who she might be or become as well as what she lacks. She recognizes the wolf outside as part of her inner self as the Wolf sees Little Red as his feminine aspect. The woods stand in stark contrast to society and its conventions; therefore nature represents the perfect place for exploration of self, symbolic exchanges, societal rebellion and desire fulfillment:

> Yet, as much as Doré desired to depict the pleasure of recognition through a sexual symbolic exchange, he probably identified more with the wolf, and thus there is an indication in his illustration that the wolf seeks to dominate with his gaze which would cancel out mutuality. The text of the

> tale dictated the wolf's gaze as phallic domination…and the conventions of society reinforced such male desire during Doré's time. In addition, the look or gaze of Little Red Riding Hood appears to invite the wolf's gaze/desire, and therefore, she incriminates herself in this act. Implicit in her gaze is that she may be leading him on – to granny's house, to a bed, to be dominated. She tells him the way, the path to the house. But where is she actually leading him? Why? (Zipes, *Prince*, p. 243).

French philosopher and semiotician Roland Barthes previously examined Doré's Little Red Riding Hood illustrations as culturally internalized, fixed images in "The Rhetoric of the Image". He indicates that text anchors meaning as linguistic messages used to counter the terror of uncertain signs found in images. "For Barthes, Doré's depiction of Red Riding Hood in bed with the wolf could have any number of interpretations, not least the potential sexual relationship between the pair. The text, according to his theory, counters the terror of this image by qualifying its meaning, establishing a specific reading for this depiction" (Bonner, *Visualising*). Although Zipes reads Doré images as highly sexualized, that is only one possible interpretation.

Carter, Fairy Tales, and Pornography

At this point, sketching a portrait of Angela Carter's philosophy as a writer and adapter proves most advantageous to this study by revealing shared agendas with Neil Jordan as a writer and filmmaker. Carter's own words best illume the sort of authors and stories that attracted her as an artist. In her afterword to her first collection of short stories entitled Fireworks, Carter confesses: " … I'd always been fond of Poe, and Hoffman – Gothic tales, cruel tales, tales of wonder, tales of terror, fabulous narratives that deal directly with the imagery of the unconscious – mirrors; the externalised self; forsaken castles; haunted forests; forbidden sexual objects … The tale does not log everyday experience, as the short story does; it interprets everyday experience through a system of

imagery derived from subterranean areas behind everyday experience, and therefore the tale cannot betray its readers into a false knowledge of everyday experience. The Gothic tradition in which Poe writes … retains a singular moral function – that of provoking unease. The tale has relations with subliterary forms of pornography, ballad and dream … " (Carter 1995 p. 459).

As this passage expresses, Carter embraces the tale as an approach replete with Gothic, Romantic, Symbolist and Surrealist intent. Her interests in pornography and fairy tale seemed to culminate at the same time near the end of the 1970s. Cultural critic and fiction Marina Warner (who most certainly carries on where Carter left off) tells of Carter's controversy in feminist circles due to her bold exploration of "women's waywardness, and especially…their attraction to the Beast in the very midst of repulsion" (Warner p. 308).

In 1976, Carter was commissioned to adapt Perrault's *contes de fees.* Two years later with The Bloody Chamber, Carter radically revises Perrault's vision, especially repeatedly reworking variations of Beauty and the Beast within her own folk tales infused with wickedly fun mischief. As Warner playfully states that in this collection Carter "mawls governessy moralizers" whilst fortifying her modern, beautiful heroines with the courage "to play with the Beast precisely because his animal nature excites them and gives their desires licence … " (Warner p. 308). The Bloody Chamber includes three werewolf-laden vignettes including "The Company of Wolves," "The Werewolf," and "Wolf-Alice," which eschew Perrault's polite, courtly modesty in favor of restoring brazen, earthy carnality to Little Red Riding Hood. The young girls in Carter's tales are not meek little lambs but voracious creatures, who answer the call of the wild by straying

from the path and talking to the strange wolf that kindles their darkest passions. Just as she wrote three striking, subversive versions of “Little Red Riding Hood,” she also wrote two to three experimental versions of other classical fairy tales to explore the different plot and character facets to shed new light on contemporary social and sexual relations as well as archetypes and stereotypes. Carter probed father/daughter relationships and the bartering involved in marriages in her takes on “Beauty and the Beast,” whereas her substantial “Cinderella” trilogy investigated the mother/daughter dynamics of dependency and projection. As Zipes succinctly states concerning Carter’s literary agenda, “At the bottom of her profound interest in fairy tales was a fierce ideological commitment to overcome false dichotomies that separated the sexes and led to male dominance in all spheres of life, public and private” (Zipes, *Enchanted*, p. 134).

Not only do Carter’s fairy tales from *The Bloody Chamber* imbue the original characters with flesh and blood but also gives them teeth to fiercely bite, particularly the tales dealing with women’s persecution and violation. She deftly adds nuance and intricacy to her fairy tale adaptations. “The Company of Wolves” serves as an exemplar demarcating the shift in literary and filmic conversations and representations of the Little Red Riding Hood character from passive victim to inquisitive woman in search of adventure and desire. Until the Jordan film in 1984, most cinematic versions of Little Red had been based on Perrault, Grimm or a bit of both tales. Thankfully, through the work of Carter and other feminist writers, Little Red and other fairy tale maidens have continued to be more fully expanded and sensuously portrayed in all of the arts (Zipes, *Enchanted*, p. 135).

Warner explains that Angela Carter adored the lyricism and mystery inherent within the Northern European fairy tale, "East o' the Sun and West o' the Moon." As a variation on the Cupid and Psyche theme, "a White Bear taking the role of Eros abducts the heroin, asking as he does so, 'Are you afraid?' She says, 'No,' and climbs eagerly on to his back to go forth into a new life with him" (Warner p. 310). This literary image recurs throughout all of Carter's takes on Little Red Riding Hood.

In between Carter's fairy translation and her own tome of tales, she wrote The Sadeian Woman, which analyzed the sexual politics of sadomasochism through the lens of the Marquis de Sade's writings. As Jack Zipes acknowledges in his introduction to a recent edition of Carter's translation of Perrault's fairy tales, with The Sadeian Woman, Carter posits that women, feminists even, begin from a place of feeling disempowered as victims. "Instead of victimization she focused on how women could realize their deep sexual desires, whether sadistic or masochistic, and could determine their sexual and social roles with greater freedom. Much of the philosophy in The Sadeian Woman is fully developed in The Bloody Chamber, in which classical tales…are given unusual twists that open up the possibilities for sexual play and social transformation" (Carter 2008 p. x).

In Carter's rendition of Perrault's Little Red Riding Hood tale, she remains faithful to the content whilst reclaiming the sense of the country granny storytelling as she sits and knits by the fire, by sprinkling the translation with lively British colloquialisms, such as "gobbling up" (Carter 2008 p. x). As the rationale for this method, Carter recounted in her preface to an earlier edition her own childhood experience of her grandmother reading Red Riding Hood as the following: "My own

grandmother used to tell me the story of 'Red Riding Hood' in almost Perrault's very words, although she never spoke one single word of French in all her life. She liked, especially, to pounce on me, roaring, in personation of the wolf's pounce in Red Riding Hood [sic] at the end of the story, although she could not have known that Perrault himself suggests this acting out of the story to the narrator in a note of the margin of the manuscript" (Roemer p. 149). In the film adaptation *The Company of Wolves,* Carter and Jordan put the pounce back into Little Red Riding Hood, not by the restrictive yet doting granny but by the charming and seductive werewolf.

Carter's appreciation of folk tales' oral tradition led her to investigate the role of women's voices with radio plays. In 1976, not only did Carter publish her translation of Perrault but also transmitted her first radio play, *Vampirella*, which she chillingly rewrote as a dark fairy tale for The Bloody Chamber (Crofts p. 40). She reformulated two other stories from this collection into radio plays – "The Company of Wolves" (1980) and "Puss in Boots" (1982). Although radio technology was key for Carter to actuate the mechanisms of her fairy tale realms, her plays proved mesmerizing because "even if stripped of all the devices of radio illusion, radio retains the atavistic lure, the atavistic power of voices in the dark and the writer who gives words to those voices retains some of the authority of the most antique teller of tales" (Crofts p. 40). Carter perceived the oral tradition as forging "the most vital connection we have with the imaginations of the ordinary men and women whose labour created our world"; therefore, for Carter, radio writing represented "an extension and an amplification of writing for the written page" as well as a reinvoking of the primal pleasure of oral storytelling (Crofts pp. 40-41).

In addition to an inner confessional narrative, Carter bestows listeners with an unmediated access to female subjectivity in the radio version of *The Company of Wolves*. In this play, Little Red Riding Hood directly addresses the audience as she interrupts one of Granny's old wives' tale graphically detailing a werewolf attack of a young girl (Crofts p. 49). Although in the play and the film, Granny fascinates Little Red Riding Hood with her sordid tales of warning, our heroine rejects Granny's path as expressed on a "thoughts microphone" for the radio recording. Interestingly, Rosaleen as Little Red Riding Hood does not resort to voice-over in the film; because, we are given direct access to her thoughts visually in Carter's and Jordan's dream world. If we do not see Rosaleen act out her thoughts, she boldly voices her emotions. In the radio version of *The Company of Wolves,* Red Riding Hood tells us the following about her state of being: " … not such a little girl, for all that you baby me, Granny. Thirteen going on fourteen, the hinge of your life, when you are neither one thing nor the other, nor child nor woman, some magic, inbetween thing, an egg that holds its own future in it. An egg not yet cracked against the cup. I am the very magic space that I contain. I stand and move within an invisible pentacle, untouched, invisible, immaculate. Like snow. Waiting. The clock inside me, that will strike once a month, not yet…wound…up…I don't bleed. I can't bleed. I don't know the meaning of the word, fear. Fear?" (Crofts p. 49).

In Carter's short story, a narrator tells us about Little Red Riding Hood's physical maturation with similar imagery as "her breasts have just begun to swell," signaling the onset of menstruation, "the clock inside her that will strike, henceforward, once a month." Yet, she still contains untapped potential as "an unbroken egg; she is a sealed vessel; she has inside her a magic space the entrance to which is shut tight with a plug of

membrane; she is a closed system; she does not know how to shiver. She has her knife and she is afraid of nothing" (Crofts 49-50). Egg imagery with similarly resound in the film version, to be explored a little further on in this paper.

Adaptation Theories Taken to Task

In an attempt to find an adaptation theory that stands up to the task of dealing with the many versions of Angela Carter's "The Company of Wolves," adaptation scholar Thomas M. Leitch's essay "Where Are We Going, Where Have We Been?" proves an excellent point of origin. Leitch summarizes Robert Stam's approach as deriving from Bakhtin [also a grand purveyor of the carnivalesque, which also suits the grotesquery that crops up in Carter's fiction] that recognizes the shortcomings of fidelity [which theorist Brian MacFarlane endlessly finds a bore as well]. Ever so poetically, Stam contends that fidelity is only one of "a whole constellation of tropes [for adaptation] – translation, reading, dialogization, cannibalization, transmutation, transfiguration, and signifying – each of which sheds light on a different dimension of adaptation" (Welsh and Lev p. 332). The terms "cannibalisation" and "transmutation" prove the most salient to this study, specifically with their metaphorical relation to the portrayed lycanthropy. Leitch states that following Stam's critical trajectory leads to adaptation as intertextual studies, with a given text as a rereading of earlier texts and "every text, whether it poses as an original or an adaptation, has the same claims to aesthetic or ontological privilege as any other" (Welsh and Lev p. 332). By reconfiguring the proponents of adaptation study in such a way, fidelity loses its significance in determining a text's success or failure. Leitch poses a series of new questions with which to interrogate a text:

> How has a given adaptation rewritten its source text?
> Why has it chosen to select and rewrite the source texts it has?

> How have the texts available to us inevitably been rewritten by the act of reading?
> How do we want to rewrite them anew? (Welsh and Lev p. 332).

Angela Carter addressed similar questions through her writings and fairy tale revisions. In "Notes from the Front Line," she said, "I try, when I write fiction, to think on my feet – to present a number of propositions in a variety of different ways, and then leave the reader to construct her own fiction for herself from the elements of my fictions. (Reading is just as creative an activity as writing and most intellectual development depends upon new readings of old texts)" (Crofts p. 46).

The original innovator of adaptation theory as it applies to film is George Bluestone with his thoughtful book Novels into Film. Yet it is important to challenge a few of his thoughts that undoubtedly come across as naïve these days, especially now that contemporary filmmakers (Stephen Soderbergh, Raúl Ruiz, Luis Bunuel, Neil Jordan, Michel Gondry and Stan Brakhage, to name a half dozen), since the inception of Bluestone's ideas in the late 1950s, have created work that runs counter to what he proposed. In the section entitled "The Modes of Consciousness," Bluestone argues that film fails in rendering the mental states of dream, imagination and memory in comparison with the written word (Bluestone p. 47). He says that film finds presenting streams of consciousness difficult, which reads as a bit counterintuitive considering filmmakers can create a smooth stream of images, especially via seamless editing. He states that film as a medium becomes challenged even further by the endeavor of "presenting states of mind which are defined precisely by the absence of them in the visible world. Conceptual imaging, by definition, has no existence in space" (Bluestone p. 47). Yet, George Macunias and the Fluxus Group showed that an artistic concept can exist as art on the

page or can be actualized in time and space; it is just a physical extension of the artist's imagination, that can be perpetrated by anyone to created their own version of art object or film.

Bluestone states, " … dreams and memories, which exist nowhere but in the individual consciousness, cannot be adequately represented in spatial terms. Or rather, the film, having only arrangements of space to work with, cannot render thought, for the moment thought is externalized, it is no longer thought" (Bluestone pp. 47-48). Considering that he brings Henri Bergson into the equation (which greatly strengthens his look at the types of time in film such as chronological and psychological), he misses his own point. As Bergson astutely recognized, once you make a model for an experiment, you take the phenomenon out of its flow and thus alter its very nature. Therefore, a thought committed to print is not the same as the thought itself yet Bluestone thinks verbal language is more appropriate to conveying aspects of the mind than film is. The moment spent writing down an idea already interrupts the fluid flux of imagination. Through words on a page, the reader is lead to re-imagine the thoughts of the characters or even the original author; therefore, would these thoughts not be greatly altered?

According to Bluestone, a film arranges external signs for the audience's visual perception for the inference of thought but it cannot show us thought directly (Bluestone p. 48). Nevertheless, filmic images can construct the dreams and memories of characters and ultimately the author and show these scenes with more immediacy than words, in the blink of an eye, at 24 frames per second. Of course, we know more about the phi phenomenon and how it discredits the didactic acceptance of persistence of vision to explain away the perceptual mechanisms of cinema, than Bluestone did in his day. The

way that we perceive film images functions in the same way that we see the everyday world. Our remembrance of a film image or event looks the same in our mind's eye as an actual event. What resonates more over time, an experience of an event or our memory of it? All the filmic artisans work with the writer and director to realize these fictional dreams and imaginings. Especially, in the case of *The Company of Wolves,* Jordan collaborated with Carter to bring a joint vision of dreamt desires and transformation to the screen; therefore, they present us a filmic world that matches the terrain of the heroine Rosaleen's unconscious mind. As she dreams just as we do, her mind integrates actual objects and anxieties of her everyday into her sleeping state, where she slips into the identity of Little Red Riding Hood. Director Neil Jordan and brilliant production designer Anton Furst desired to lend an air of familiarity to the sets that one cannot quite place, duplicating the déjà vu feeling one experiences when remembering a dreamt event in the waking world (Pramaggiore p. 29). By situating the world of *The Company of Wolves* in a dreamscape, Carter and Jordan overcame the "realistic tug of the film [that] is too strong," which Bluestone complains about in films that have dream sequences. In addition, Jordan does not employ the editing techniques that Bluestone abhors to indicate dreams such as dissolves and superimpositions (Bluestone p. 48).

Bluestone feels that in film adaptation, a filmmaker does not convert the novel, only a paraphrase of it with the novel serving as raw material only (Bluestone p. 62). This statement is not contentious in itself yet what he goes on to exclaim is "…what is peculiarly filmic and what is peculiarly novelistic cannot be converted without destroying an integral part of each. That is why Joyce and Proust would seem as absurd on film as Chaplin would in print. And that is why the great innovators of the twentieth century, in

film and novel both, have had so little to do with each other, have gone their ways alone, always keeping a firm but respectful distance" (Bluestone p. 63). Obviously, he never saw Raúl Ruiz's adaptation of Marcel Proust. In *Time Regained*, Ruiz ever so elegantly make visually manifest the mechanism of memory as the bedridden figure of Proust remains in the present whilst being inundated by the involuntary memories of his past as his boudoir magically transforms into a room from his past, all through deft editing not involving the dissolve or superimposition. American film critic Phillip Lopate wholeheartedly agrees:

> What Ruiz did was to take soundings of the Proust novel, and to reorganize them into a symphonic whole. Ruiz also boldly challenged the Bluestone assertion that "The novel has three tenses; the film has only one" by transporting a seated Marcel as spectator into his own recreated memories. Proust mixed up past and present, dream-self and real self, and this is what Ruiz does too with his thoughtful cross-sections or samplings of Proust's text" (Lopate, *Novels*).

Cardwell and the Ur-Text

Examining British adaptation expert Sarah Cardwell's approach to television adaptation yields helpful tools and clues for the investigation and delectation of other media such as fairy tale and film. Although Cardwell offers a specialized method for researching adaptation that looks at the unique nature of television rather than merely applying a generic line of analysis derived from literary or film theory, it can readily be used to illuminate other literary and visual media, particularly the frequent occurrence of intertextuality. Certainly, Cardwell acknowledges theories previously postulated and does not cast them out entirely. Still, she chooses to chart new territory in adaptation theory. In the first chapter of Adaptation Revisited (2002), Cardwell proposes an alternative adaptation model that does not privilege the novel or source text above all else as the

ultimate art form or place of origin for subsequent versions. She calls for a deeper understanding of adaptation that borrows from the scientific realm of evolutionary and genetic postulations with visual adaptations as an organic progression in a natural selection of the best bits of the original entity. Cardwell elaborates, “It would be more accurate to view adaptation as the gradual development of a ‘meta-text.’ This view recognizes that a later adaptation may draw upon any earlier adaptations, as well as upon the primary source text. In a sense, this understanding of adaptation draws upon the model of genetic adaptation for its inspiration, in terms of its increased historicity and its recognition of the role that each and every adaptation, as well as the source text, has played in the formation of the most recent adaption. It allows for generic development, as subsequent film or television adaptations draw upon previous ones, and it does not posit the ‘original’ source/individual adaptation relationship as a direct, unmediated and ahistorical one” (Cardwell, Adaptation p. 25).

Cardwell uses the adaptation of Shakespeare as a prime example of the writer of texts demanding the nuanced attention afforded by Cardwell’s alternative model. It is far too easy to regard Shakespeare’s plays as the ultimate version yet often times he was doing exactly what subsequent artists inspired by Shakespeare do: drawing on what came before. [We will not enter into the controversy of who actually composed Shakespeare’s best work]. Regardless, he derived his own folios from pre-existing histories, oral tales and writings. Considering that Shakespeare was also practicing and perfecting the art of adaptation, Cardwell proposes that subsequent “adaptations can be regarded as points on a continuum, as part of the extended development of a singular, infinite meta-text: a

valuable story of myth that is constantly growing and developing, being retold, reinterpreted and reassessed" (Adaptation p. 25).

Cardwell's assertion to interpret each new version of a particular text as a myth, an ur-text that exists outside of and beyond each and any retelling proves most attractive, especially in the case of *The Company of Wolves*. It then becomes the challenge of every creator in any medium to determine the quintessence of a specific tale, "the most fundamental parts of the tale without which an adaptation would lose its identity as that tale" (Adaptation 26). Cardwell acknowledges that this is not a new concept yet she amplifies it from Susan Wilsmore's discourse distinguishing this sort of entity – the ur-text – in looking at a work and the text. Wilsmore identifies that an artwork contains, "a cluster of … essential [aesthetic and cultural] properties as is necessary to its very existence" (Adaptation p. 26). Cardwell claims this cluster for the purposes of analyzing adaptation. She considers precisely why this ur-text has been previously undetectable in traditional adaptation studies. It is undeniable that it exists in most adaptations yet it is difficult to define and quantify. A myth or ur-text is not concrete or visible. Still, this nebulous nature, this malleable quality proves most advantageous for a fresh approach to both adapting and investigating adaptation reflecting Cardwell's playfully erudite consideration of what is (an) adaptation.

By offering the ur-text as a portal into accessing adaptations, this path presents as a slippery slope that fidelity adherents would rather not traverse. This model calls into question the stuff to which a retelling might be faithful. Cardwell brings Walter Benjamin into the discussion by recognizing that, "the presence of the original is the prerequisite to the concepts of authenticity" (Adaptation p. 26). By offering a tacit, infinite ur-text rather

than the obvious, demarcated novel as the point of origin, unlimited potentialities arise as this ur-text might thrive and mutate with each retelling of a story. Cardwell looks to Kenneth Branagh's *Hamlet* (1989) as an effective, filmic adaptation of Shakespeare. When a work can be unharnessed from a rigid definition of fidelity, an organic and pertinent version might materialize. Rather than recreating the Middle Ages, Branagh transports his Hamlet to the Regency Period onscreen. Cardwell shows that what makes this version so effective is not fidelity to the Shakespeare's intended play [yet there are specific concessions that Branagh does make to Shakespeare by restoring previously missing dialogue] but the pursuit of an ultimate performance capturing the essence of "Hamlet" (Adaptation p. 27). This also does not discount the existence of a definitive performance of *Hamlet* as presented by the Royal Shakespeare Company with Mark Rylance onstage clad in pajamas. Essentially, what begins in a particular form does not need to stay in that same format to be essential. Nor does it need to be fidelitous. Eventually, Cardwell concludes that a screen adaptation from literature creates a discrete artwork worthy of being treated as such (Adaptation p. 28). As Cardwell indicates, a preoccupation with the source novel would disallow "the programme's own agenda, its artistic choices, its emphases and voice" (Cardwell, Davies p. 181). Before exploring Carter's and Jordan's choices, emphases and articulation of voice, it is helpful to chronicle the events that led to their collaboration.

Fairy Tale Conspirators – Where Carter and Jordan Meet

Neil Jordan (1950-) and Angela Carter (1940-1992) met at a commemorative celebration of centennial of the birth of James Joyce in Dublin. At this time, Channel 4 commissioned Carter to adapt her radio play *The Company of Wolves* into a 30-minute script. Jordan thought that it would be better to integrate Carter's others short stories into a film script with the dreaming girl as a portmanteau device containing the other tales like a matryoshka (Russian nesting doll). The film's structure fulfills Edgar Allan Poe's line of poetry, "All that we see or seem/Is but a dream within a dream," as it features a series of stories told within the main story as well as dreams within dreams. As portrayed in the film, dreaming equates with artistic creativity. In *The Company of Wolves,* storytelling becomes a means of transformation and liberation for the Little Red Riding hood heroine to find and define herself. Her search for self is analogous with the writer's search for a voice and purpose (Rockett p. 39).

Once Jordan and Carter “mapped out an outline of proposed scenes which she then wrote up” throughout the summer of 1983. Jordan recalls, “once we had agreed on the structure, the writing seemed to flow quite naturally from it, since it gave free rein to Angela’s own taste for narrative subversions” (Crofts p. 108). Appropriately, British media researcher Charlotte Crofts likens the hybridization of literary and film studies to the in-between state of the werewolf. “Indeed, the central figure of the werewolf can be seen as an extended metaphor for the generic transformation performed by the screen adaptation of Carter’s story. As Paul Sutton and Annie White argue, the film is ‘an articulation of not only the kinds of transformations suggested by the device of the werewolf, but also an enactment of the very process of adaptation,’ further suggesting that it is ‘rather fitting that the werewolf should be read as symbolising the cultural hybrid which is literary adaptation’” (Crofts p. 113). Jordan, as Carter, was devoted to the philosophically alchemical manipulation of source texts. In the case of Jordan, he has been especially dedicated to working with the original authors of books including Carter, Patrick McCabe and Anne Rice to best instill their visionary essence to transform prima materia into the philosopher’s stone whilst showing all of the processes and stages to render the transformation (or transmogrification in the case of the terrifyingly tantalizing werewolves). In specifying the essential identifiers of a given story, Jordan effectively translates the ur-text onto the silver screen.

As Irish film historians Emer and Kevin Rockett astutely identify, Neil Jordan’s oeuvre evidences a striking portrayal of character and bodily transformations with penetrable borders and mutable identities. As the Rocketts recognize, *The Company of Wolves* “is not a standard horror film; it belongs to the sub-genres of the female gothic,

the werewolf and the nightmare, as well as to the genres of (sexual) coming-of-age, fantasy, surrealism, expressionism and film noir…Jordan introduces us to a world that is not explicitly fantastic… It is within this second world, between the real and the other, or what is permitted and open, and concealed and transgressive, that *The Company of Wolves* hovers" (Rockett p. 37-38). The borderland that Jordan creates then surveys lies between waking and sleep, conscious and unconscious desires, girlhood and adolescence, humans and wolves (Rockett p. 38). Jordan investigated similar terrains in his novel The Dream of a Beast (1983) in which the world begins to subtly change as a man slowly turns into a beast, experiments sexually to discover aspects of his new identity.

The Dream's Frame

At the beginning of *The Company of Wolves*, Rosaleen (knowingly played by Sarah Patterson, who was twelve-years-old at the time) sulks in her room, situated in the present day of the early 1980s, with a tummy ache (easily read as menstrual cramps indicating the onset of puberty) as she slips into a dream. Both the room and the dream serve as transitional spaces for examining childhood innocence and curiosity as it gives way to the adult world of eroticism and desire. Two other times throughout the film, it appears as if Carter and Jordan bring us back to this scene as she awakens with a start from the intensity of her dreams; however, these scenes are only false interludes of waking up – she is actually still dreaming.

In addition to playfully exploring the fabric of dream and the unconscious, this framing device aids in accounting for any possible anachronisms in the dream state because this is a modern girl dreaming about what was once upon a time. Catherine Hardwicke in *Red Riding Hood* (2011), which borrows heavily from the

contemporizations made by Carter and Jordan, embraces anachronism whilst disposing of the dream structure and scoring her period piece with modern alternative rock songs that match the independence and determination of her lovely heroine in a hood. Jack Zipes takes issue with the framing device in *The Company of Wolves*; this is where we part company. He believes that this framing device of undermines the integrity of the original story, screenplay and the dream section itself by contradicting the celebratory representation of Rosaleen, her taming of the wolf and her desire to transform. He discounts the collaborative effort between Carter and Jordan. He thinks the framing device that delineates waking from dream to be a flawed strategy for encasing all of the tales within the dream as well as the frame to be obvious and ultimately offensive to feminist sensibilities. As Rosaleen wakes from the dream, she screams in fright as the unbridled forces of nature, a wolf pack, break through her unconscious mind out of her dream to invade her bedroom. Zipes finds the handling of her menstruation and fear to be faintly comic. He does not recognize that maturation is scary, especially in a prim, ordered, bourgeois world where one does not mention biological functions. In her dream, Rosaleen learns to conquer her fears yet she has not faced them yet in real life. As will be later illustrated, Jordan's framing device serves to satirize the British upper class and the sanitation of the fairy tale by transporting our dreaming heroine to a setting more in sync with the oral tale depicting an intelligent peasant girl with a mother in touch with feminine cycles (Zipes, *Enchanted*, p.148).

The dream wolf penetrates the real world in *The Company of Wolves.*

Fairy tale expert Jessica Tiffin writes more genially concerning the framing device employed in *The Company of Wolves.* She finds the film to be true to Carter's pursuit of fairy tale revision and scrutinization of burgeoning female sexuality under the auspice of patriarchy. As the striking filmic actualization of Carter's tales, Tiffin finds Jordan's framing device to be a creative method to embed the tales, to give Rosaleen a voice and to justify the logic of seemingly disconnected, nightmare visuals. Quite rightly, Tiffin deems Rosaleen as a modern corollary to Lewis Carroll's Alice unabashedly facing the threats and thrills of her dreamy wonderland. Jordan's version of Rosaleen "evokes beautifully the child in Carter's tale 'The Company of Wolves,' who 'stands and moves within the invisible pentacle of her own virginity…she is a closed system, she does not know how to shiver.' The closed system is also that of fairy tale, each self-contained narrative an investigation not only of sexual subjectivity but also of narrative" (Tiffin p. 192).

Tiffin offers further thoughts and counters on another possible criticism of Jordan's framing of the main body of the film as dream. "Tolkien denies narratives framed as dream the status of fairy tale; he argues, 'if a waking writer tells you that his tale is only a thing imagined in his sleep, he cheats deliberately on the primal desire at the heart of Faerie: the realisation, independent of the conceiving mind, of imagined wonder' (Tiffin p. 194). Tiffin defends *The Company of Wolves* by positing that it avoids Tolkien's trap due to the visceral village setting that accesses a vivid psychological reality. In addition, she views Jordan's exploration of Rosaleen's adolescent dream and unconscious as a way to psychologically and symbolically empower Carter's feminist agenda. Jordan infuses Rosaleen's dream with marvelously Freudian condensation as well as Jungian archetypal alteration as the unconscious reworks fairy tale symbols and the everyday objects from the waking world take on new life in the dream realm (which will soon be explained in this text) (Tiffin p. 194).

Expressing fidelitous preferences, Zipes favors the framing device from the screenplay. The girl in the screenplay is called Alice and has a younger sister (Rosaleen in the film has an older sister named Alice). He goes on to recount the opening sequence as follows: "Alice is disturbed, and there is a "sense of oppressive and unfocused sensuality, adolescent turbulence" in the bedroom. She lies on her bed surrounded by toys, dolls, and fairytale books, one which exhibits Gustav Doré's illustration of "Little Red Riding Hood," and there is also a film poster picturing a werewolf. Her first dream is a nightmare in which she envisions herself moving from an artificial forest of dolls and toys to a real Forest where she is attacked and killed by a wolf. The death of the dream-

Alice brings about a transformation: the birth of Rosaleen, Alice's dream persona, who will face down wolves and determine her own destiny" (Zipes, *Enchanted*, p. 148).

The Fairy Tale Dream Onscreen

The Dreaming Rosaleen (Sarah Patterson) in *The Company of Wolves.*

As visually translated by Jordan, he retains a great deal from Carter's description. Wearing red glistening lipstick and make-up, Rosaleen restlessly sleeps with the British teen magazine *My Weekly* on her pillow with the feature story ever so aptly titled "The Shattered Dream." Her room is littered with uncanny toys as well as the trappings of the adult world including a pink and white shapely satin and Chantilly lace-laden dress (Rockett p.41-42). From her sister Alice's complaints outside her locked door, we know that Rosaleen has been trying on her older sister's make-up again. The fancy frock suggests apparel for coming-out into society so that boys may begin to court Rosaleen. The dream world that she slips into appears concurrent with the time of Perrault's fairy tale with the danger-tinged air of Carter's original story – a village where wolves still

pose a physical threat. As the Rocketts rightly propose via the lens of Bettelheim, Rosaleen's dreams "move away from the intimacies of the childhood bedroom into a more obviously psychosexual world of Red Riding Hood. Into, in other words, the territory best explored by Bruno Bettelheim in The Uses of Enchantment (1978) in which he argues that the function of fairytales is to act as 'magic mirrors' into our inner selves, which help in the discovery of the path(s) to adulthood, contentment and independence" (Rockett p. 43).

Film critic James Rose coins useful nomenclature in distinguishing between the two versions of our heroine in *The Company of Wolves*: The Dreaming Rosaleen (the upper class girl of the contemporary world frame) and the The Dreamt Rosaleen (the village dwelling Little Red Riding Hood that we follow throughout the main body/dream of the film). As he relates, this play with duality within the narrative manifests as a Gothic trait (Rose p. 2). Rosaleen's unconscious casts everyone from Rosaleen's waking life as his or her own double in this dreamt realm. The objects scattered about Rosaleen's room already iconic as keepsakes found in any girl's room of her age, class and era take on a second symbolic life in her dream. Ever so subtly placed amongst ephemeral teenage trappings the camera rushes past the Gustave Doré illustration of Little Red Riding Hood in bed with the wolf posted on her wall. On a shelf in the Dreaming Rosaleen's bedroom, a jolly, bespectacled Granny doll holds a copy of Beatrice Potter's The Tale of Mrs. Tiggy Winkle, the beloved hedgehog heroine. This porcelain doll becomes the Dreamt Rosaleen's flesh and blood Gram as the Mrs. Tiggy Winkle appears as an actual hedgepig in one of the Dreamt Rosaleen's stories.

Little Red Riding Hood encounters the wolf in grandma's clothing as drawn by Gustave Doré.

Cuddly toys such as sailor boy and a teddy bear transplanted into Rosaleen's dream gain menacing intent as life-size creatures that still desire to cuddle yet are no longer perceived as sweet as they were in their miniature form. By reaching out for her, they terrify the fleeing Dreamt Alice as she encounters them in the primordial forest. In the Dreaming Rosaleen's bed chamber, a harlequin doll holds a set of panpipes – the musical score integrates their imagined sound to transition into the dream as this instrument sprouts from the forest floor as a massive formation of reeds resembling a pipe organ. The first part of Rosaleen's dream enacts a revenge fantasy on her nagging sister. As Alice is pursued and ultimately devoured by a pack of wolves, we see the Dreaming Rosaleen smile with satisfaction upon Alice's demise.

We first see the Dreamt Rosaleen at her sister's funeral, where her mother takes a crucifix from Alice's neck and places it around Rosaleen's neck as a token of protection yet she knows that the real danger are actual starving wolves and that knives or other

weapons are the best protection. The crucifix serves later to visually distinguish Rosaleen after she chooses to join the company of werewolf companions by the dream's and film's end. The mother is loving, practical, devout yet in touch with nature. Although Rosaleen's grandmother totes a Bible [and wears a mink stole, a living one at that], her brand of religion is heavily laced with peasant superstitions, especially in connection with the bestial nature of men and werewolves.

Granny (Angela Lansbury) knits a cape and weaves tales for her beloved Rosaleen in *The Company of Wolves.*

Granny (perfectly played by Angela Lansbury) refers to Alice as a "poor little lamb" and laments that she was on her own. Obviously, Alice must have strayed from the path, which is true considering that monstrous toys and dollhouses populated by rats frightened her off of it. Rosaleen questions, "Why couldn't she save herself?" For Rosaleen certainly would, she walks bravely through the woods armed with an impressive knife that she is not shy about brandishing.

As a cautionary tale emphasizing the importance of staying on the path - both the sylvan and moral path, Granny tells Rosaleen about an innocent village maiden who marries a charming travelling man (Jordan film regular Stephen Rea). Through Granny and her stories, Neil Jordan and Angela Carter work in Carter's werewolf lore from her original The Bloody Chamber tales. This man's eyebrows met in the middle – a definite sign that a man is actually a werewolf. After a festive dance through the forest by the wedding party, the couple arrives at their cottage, where her brother has placed a hedgehog in their bed as a joke. Before the newlyweds can consummate their marriage, the traveller answers the call of nature upon seeing the full moon. He is not demurely "making water" outside rather than using a chamber pot as his naïve wife assumes; he has rejoined his wolf pack. After his mysterious disappearance written off as a tragic wolf attack, she remarries. Years later after settling into domesticity with three children, the first husband returns unannounced with tangled hair and ravaged clothes, demanding dinner. The woman swiftly serves him. His startling appearance and coarse demeanor makes her small children cry. Once the traveller realizes that she bore another man's children, he flies into a rage that culminates in his ripping his flesh from his face so that the wolf inside can spring out – for the worst wolves are hairy on the inside.

In this most horrific scene, made even more so with innovative special effects and animatronics, the gory musculature of the man agonizingly transmogrifies into that of a wolf. The second husband bursts in, lopping off the head of the wolf with a single blow. The wolfen head lands, sinking into a pail of milk. As the head re-emerges, it has reverted to its human shape. Since its expression was beautiful and serene, the wife

admits that the severed head's visage looked the same as on the day that she married the traveller, which inspires the current husband to strike his wife.

As James Rose notices, Rosaleen is not horrified by Granny's old wives' tale; instead, she remarks, "I'd never let a man strike me". "It is the inability of the story's female protagonist to defend herself that shocks her, not the werewolf who attacks her" (Rose p. 9). Film and theatre scholar Carole Zucker sees this story as evidence of Granny's view that "sexuality is inextricably bound up with bestiality, with the evil of the natural world, and with the irreconcilable split between nature and culture". Granny's sentiment is also confirmed by the fact that she believes that men are as nice as pie until they have had their way with you; afterwards, the beast is unleashed (Zucker p. 2).

Of course, Rosaleen's mother (portrayed with earthy verve by Tusse Silberg) believes that the beast in man meets its match in women. As described by Dreamt Rosaleen, a "clownish" village boy brings her a handpicked bouquet in wishing to walk with her after the church service. Her father (frequent horror film actor David Warner) teases Rosaleen by biting the heads off her flowers yet both her parents know that this is a natural, adolescent progression. Her parents allow her to walk with the neighbor boy, only if they do not stray from the path. Rosaleen dons the soft as snow, red as blood cloak that her Granny especially knitted for her. He tries to kiss her. She kisses him back, on her own terms, merely to show that kissing does not frighten her. When he is dissatisfied and wants another kiss, Rosaleen makes him chase her, eluding his capture by leaving the path and scaling an impossibly tall tree. Once off the path, the forest proves itself not terrifying but rather enchanting with march hares, white rabbits, coiling serpents and frogs that do not transform into princes (yet as later illustrated the princes do turn into

wolves) in the most surreal and striking dream scene *The Company of Wolves*. Not only the forest but also her own reflection offers a source of enchantment. Once up the tree, Rosaleen happens upon a stork's nest filled with eggs, a hand mirror and a pan pot of brightly hued blood-red lip rouge. This is the same hand mirror that rests on the Dreaming Rosaleen's pillow, as well as the lipstick color that symbolizes Rosaleen's sexual arousal and awakening and her jubilant acceptance of her newly hatched desire and desirability. Whilst magically hovering on the top branch looking into the nest, the Dreamt Rosaleen paints her lips and admires her reflection as the eggs crack to reveal Christ-like, porcelain babies. Visually, she is now a young woman full of reproductive and sexual potential. Parallel editing establishes a connection between Rosaleen and wolves. After she paints her lips, we see the bloody muzzle of the predatory wolf.

Rosaleen's coming of age as symbolized by the hatched egg and engagement with her reflection in *The Company of Wolves.*

After her suitor loses her, he runs back willy-nilly to the village. He becomes the boy who literally cried wolf as he discovers wolf-inflicted livestock carnage along the way. Rosaleen returns safely and calms her mother by showing her one of the Jesus baby figurines. The baby weeps and Rosaleen's mother smiles at the sight. Still, the fear of losing another daughter compels her father and the village men to construct a concealed pit with a duck as bait (as in Carter's written story) to ensnare the wolf. The men succeed in killing the wolf. When the father brings his trophy of a wolf's forepaw home, it turns out to be a man's hand complete with a ring. Although shocked, he says that, "Seeing is believing." Rosaleen also needs to touch the hand as proof. The men in her dream are

visually oriented; Rosaleen explores her dreamscape with haptic curiosity. She does not merely make discoveries by her senses; she comes to realizations by telling stories herself.

After Granny relates two grisly stories to her, she finds the confidence to try her own hand at weaving a tale for her mother whilst rebelling against the prohibitive myths of her Granny, which she begins with, “Once upon a time … ”. The tale serves to parody the Rococo opulence of Perrault’s salon. At a posh wedding banquet with British lords and ladies all powdered and wigged, a beautiful and visibly pregnant Scottish woman crashes the affair to seek revenge for groom’s violation and rejection of her. She casts a spell that breaks a real mirror, symbolizing the shattering of surface artificialities. Since she contends that wolves have better manners, these elegantly clad men and women amusingly transform into wolves in a tableau that deftly disintegrates into carnivalesque grotesquery underscored by delirious calliope-laden circus music as part of George Fenton’s lovely and effective score. This witch damns this company of wolves to serenade her baby nightly, as she rocks the babe to sleep on a bough of a tall tree – obvious images drawn into the tale from Rosaleen’s own exploration of the woods.

A playful poke at the Perrault's salon – the transformed wedding party in *The Company of Wolves.*

Once the snow has fallen, Rosaleen takes a basket of distilled spirits and oatcakes to Granny. The basket also contains a fierce-looking knife. The village boy wants to accompany her for protection. He guarantees her a safe passage, which she abruptly rejects by showing him that her knife is bigger than his is and that she is as brave and capable as she is pretty. On her way to Granny, Little Red Rosaleen encounters a princely Huntsman who is actually a werewolf in disguise [adeptly played with animalistic prowess by German choreographer and dancer Micha Bergese].

"I have the most remarkable object in my pocket … " The Huntsman (Micha Bergese) tempts Rosaleen into sharing her Granny's basket of goodies in *The Company of Wolves.*

As the huntsman plays a game of enticement as he convinces Rosaleen to have a picnic with the basket intended for her Granny. He coyly toys with her as he describes "the most remarkable object in his pocket." She accuses him of lying to which he replies, "Seeing in believing" (echoing her father's very words). The Huntsman produces a compass that he bets as part of a wager. If she beats him to her Granny's house by staying on "the dreary path," he will award the compass to Rosaleen. If she losses as he takes short cuts off the path, she will owe him a kiss. When she repeats her Granny's warning about werewolves, he playfully pounces on her as punishment. Although she is a bit anxious, she certainly enjoys this play and the attention from such a gentleman far more graceful than the silly village boys. He gives her his plumed hat as a token of good will as they begin their race. She pauses not to pick flowers and play with butterflies as in the Perrault version of the fairy tale but to examine her reflection once again in the hand mirror. She examines her make-up and ponders her attractiveness to the opposite sex. Parallels again are established through editing – this time between Rosaleen and the

Huntsman: her application of lip color is mirrored by the Huntsman smearing pheasant blood across his lips as his eyes have taken on a preternatural appearance in his partially aroused, lycanthropic state. In the Doré image, we may not have spied on a lover's rendezvous as Zipes contends but Jordan's interpretation in *The Company of Wolves* most certainly provides a sexually charged tableau for the audience to voyeuristically and pleasurably witness.

As per usual, The Huntsman arrives first and Granny is a goner (in both the screenplay and the film). He impersonates Rosaleen's voice. Using language from Carter's translation of Perrault, she tells him to "lift up the latch and walk in." He enters and swiftly kills Granny's mink that hisses at him. Just as in her stories, Granny continues to demonize the werewolf as she holds her Bible as a superstition shield and orders him back to hell. Truthfully, he tells her that he does not come from hell but from the forest. She puts up a good fight by throwing her Bible at his head and attempting to strike the Huntsman with a glowing red poker from the fire. She injures him by both defensive strikes and he licks his wounds like an animal. With a single, powerful blow, he knocks her head from off her shoulders and it breaks apart like a porcelain doll as dream logic prevails.

Beside the blazing fire that devours the undigested bits of Granny, the Huntsman waits for Rosaleen as his rocks rhythmically with a restrained intensity in Granny's chair. He impersonates Granny's voice inviting Rosaleen into the cottage. He tells her that Granny is fetching firewood from the woodpile outside. Considering how ungallant this is, Rosaleen realizes that this must be a lie. She looks out the window to see wolves decorating the wintry landscape. The full moon turns blood red in the night sky,

representing not only the wolf's carnage but also Rosaleen's sexual maturation. The equation of the lunar cycle with menstruation and lycanthropy derives from Carter's short story "Wolf-Alice" as well as the notion of women as werewolves. This visual emblem signaling the loss of innocence is repeated in Rosaleen's last story to the Huntsman of a wounded wolf-girl, wonderfully pantomimed by Gothic musician Danielle Dax (who entitled one of her albums *Jesus Egg That Wept*). She knows that Granny is dead from the burning tuft of grey hair and the discarded spectacles that she accidentally shatters with her boot heel. Rosaleen tries to stab the Huntsman but he stops her. He has her throw her hooded cloak into the fire. Although she begins the striptease, the Huntsman finishes it.

In the radio play, Rosaleen outwits the werewolf by having him strip. Without his clothes, he is unable to leave or pose a threat to the heroine. In the film, she questions if the Huntsman is only a man when he dresses like one. She goes through the litany of what big eyes he has and especially what big arms he has after he removes his shirt. Clothes do not make the man or in this case, the removing of them does not make a wolf. Like her, a being in-between girlhood and womanhood, he admits that he is also an in-between creature as his home is nowhere. He comes and goes between the world of man and wolf yet he loves the wolves' company. The Huntsman convinces to keep her promise of paying her debt by awarding him a kiss. The kiss startles her as she exclaims, "Jesus, what big teeth you have!" To which he seductively replies, "All the better to eat you with" – most assuredly not implying cannibalism. She shoots him with his own rifle. The gunshot to the arm sends him into a wolf-like retreat. He then transforms fully into a wolf in the most graphic yet eroticized manner.

Rosaleen apologizes, not realizing that wolves could cry. She identifies with him and no longer thinks of werewolves in the demonic way that her Granny tried to instill. To soothe him, she tells him the story of the wounded wolf. This story begins by showing the water well that we saw earlier in the title sequence of *The Company of Wolves.* The young female wolf emerges from its depths. A true innocent, a villager aims and shoots her in the arm. A priest bandages her wound. Her injury and innocence lost is represented by a white rose that turns blood red as one of her tears hit the petals. Although the priest asks her whose work she is, God's or the Devil's, he decides that it does not matter as he tends to her wound. She crosses the border back into the underworld. With this tale, Rosaleen comes to terms with her choice.

"I'll tell you a tale of a wounded wolf … " Rosaleen with the recently transformed Huntsman in *The Company of Wolves.*

Seeing Is Believing – What Is Written Versus What Is Seen

Rosaleen's film tale differs from the one Carter provides for her to tell in the screenplay. Soothingly, she says to the werewolf in the screenplay, which she cradles, "I'll tell you a story, you pitiful creature, though you showed my grandmother no pity, did you? Yet now you're worse off than she... I'll tell you a story about love between two wolves." In this story, an old, outcast wolf brings a priest to bless his dying, she-wolf mate. As the priest touches her forehead, she transforms back into a woman and the wolf become an old man in rags. The man kisses his mate's forehead. Rosaleen's moral is: "So then the priest knew what any wise child could have told him, there are no devils, except the ones we have invented" (Zipes, *Enchanted*, pp. 148-149).

After she tells this tale in the screenplay, Rosaleen transforms into a wolf, rushes through the woods, joined by another wolf. Together theses wolves in love run through the forest, past a doll's house towards Alice's room. The final screenplay passage reads as follows:

> Alice stands up on the bed. She looks down at the floor below the bed. She bounces a little on the bed, as if testing its springs. A long howl can be heard–this time somewhere beyond the open door. Alice suddenly springs off the bed, up into the air, as if off a diving-board. She curls, in a graceful jack-knife and plummets toward the floor. The floor parts. It is in fact water. She vanishes beneath it. The floor ripples, with the aftermath of her dive. Gradually it settles back into the plain floor again. We see the room, for a beat, half-forest, half-girl's bedroom. There is a whining at the door. It opens, under the pressure of one wolf's snout. First the he-wolf enters, then the she-wolf. They nose their way around Alice's things (Zipes, *Enchanted*, p. 149).

Jack Zipes prefer the magical realism of the screenplay with its replacement of the distraught Alice with the transformed Rosaleen as she and her wolfen lover explore the remnants of Alice's childhood. Her immersion in the watery floor represents the fluidity

of her identity. Zipes preference for this ending results in a less than favorable misinterpretation of the film's end: "On the other hand the film ends on a blissfully ignorant note paraphrasing Perrault's sexist moralité in a voiceover spoken in a sweet and soft female voice:

> Little girls, this seems to say,
> Never stop along your way.
> Never trust a stranger friend.
> No one knows how it will end.
> As you're pretty, so be wise.
> Wolves may lurk in any guise.
> Now as then 'tis simple truth.
> Sweetest tongue has sharpest tooth.

This scene and verse are a revolting contradiction that belies the screenplay and Angela Carter's original story and screenplay" (Zipes, *Enchanted*, p. 149).

Actually, the voice that we hear in voice over is Rosaleen's. Considering that Carter translated Perrault, this moral harkens back to his warning. Nevertheless, Rosaleen's tone sounds entirely ironic with sultry, biting edge rather than sweet and demure. Therefore, this dream frame is not useless as Zipes contends. Still, he does recognize and value the irony, sensuousness, horror and humor within the dream section of *The Company of Wolves.* Once the dream begins with the attack of Rosaleen's older sister, this gruesome occurrence sparks the storytelling and querying that readies Rosaleen for her later encounter with the dashing werewolf as well as informing her later social and sexual choices. Charlotte Crofts elucidates the dual function of the storytelling in the film – it contextualizes Granny's prohibitive, violent tales of aggressive men whilst bestowing a means for Rosaleen to express her own appetites. "In fact, by giving the main female protagonist a more vocal role, the film could be seen to offer a greater

spaces for the articulation of female subjectivity and desire than is available in the [Carter] short story" (Zipes, *Enchanted*, p. 149).

A storytelling duel ensues between grandmother and granddaughter not unlike the folk tradition of a young seamstress coming into her own to replace the older generation. Although Granny perpetuates superstition to scare Rosaleen into distrusting beastly men and relations with them, Rosaleen generates tales about outsiders that need love to end their marginalization. Rosaleen's mother offers earthy interventions as she encourages Rosaleen to find her own way through the woods. It is her own connection to nature that allows her to recognize and save her own daughter in the end from the eager hunting party. "To a certain extent, the film "justifies" the werewolf's devouring of the bigoted grandmother, whose aggressive storytelling is antiquated and needs to be replaced by her granddaughter's" (Zipes, *Enchanted*, p. 149).

In the short story and the radio play, Red Riding Hood chooses to remain human and to lie down with the tamed wolf. In the film, the Dreamt Rosaleen makes the ultimate choice of liberation – to join the company of wolves as a wolf. By morning, she has transformed; we do not see her metamorphosis onscreen yet her mother recognizes the wolf as her daughter. After the search party of her family and a few villagers discover Rosaleen in her new state, she runs with the wolves. No matter which version of Angela Carter's bold tale is told, she provides a creative space for readers to freely explore sexual desire whilst reclaiming the right for heroines to choose their own trajectory, whether it be the well-travelled passage or a jaunty route that diverges from the dreary path. From this point in the academic crossroad, future consideration of the elements from Carter that permeate the Little Red Riding Hood ur-text and their influence on successive literary

and filmic versions of this fairy tale as well as the imagery of parallels between the witch hunts and werewolf trials represent the future, lively road to travel.

The Company of Wolves. 1984. Color. 95 minutes.

Director: Neil Jordan
Producer: Chris Brown, Nik Powell and Stephen Woolley
Screenplay: Angela Carter and Neil Jordan
Source: The Bloody Chamber, Angela Carter
Cinematography: Bryan Loftus
Editor: Rodney Holland
Special Effects: Alan Whibley
Animatronic Wolf: Rodger Shaw
Costume Design: Elizabeth Waller
Production Design: Anton Furst
Art Direction: Stuart Rose
Music: George Fenton
UK Opening 21 September 1984
American Opening: 19 April 1985
Distribution: ITC (UK)/ Cannon (US)

CAST:

Angela Lansbury	...	Granny
David Warner	...	Father
Graham Crowden	...	Old Priest
Kathryn Pogson	...	Young Bride
Stephen Rea	...	Young Groom
Tusse Silberg	...	Mother
Micha Bergese	...	Huntsman
Sarah Patterson	...	Rosaleen
Georgia Slowe	...	Alice
Shane Johnstone	...	Amorous Boy
Dawn Archibald	...	Witch Woman
Richard Morant	...	Wealthy Groom
Danielle Dax	...	Wolfgirl
Jim Carter	...	Second Husband (uncredited)
Terence Stamp	...	The Devil (uncredited)

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Little Red Riding Hood

By the BROTHERS GRIMM
Translated by LUCY CRANE
Illustrated by WALTER CRANE

A Critical Theory Approach

By JENNA GARDNER
[Adapted from an idea by J. D. Wilson, Jr.]

Examining a text through the lens of critical theory, with the idea of ascertaining a deeper meaning, can be an intimidating task to high school and college students alike. This examination of *Little Red Riding Hood* is meant to allow you, the student, to learn about critical analysis. We will learn about prevailing critical theories and how they would be applied to a text that many of you might remember from childhood. The goal of taking a children's story like this is that it can be read superficially as an entertaining story with a moral or more analytically through looking at the implications of the text and images. In fact fairy tales like *Little Red Riding Hood* are so pervasive in Western culture that often they serve as allegories that other writers use as the basis for their stories. When you read Joyce Carol Oates' "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" do not be surprised if you see a connection to this fairy tale.

Now while we do not wish to take the text and "tie [it] to a chair with rope and torture a confession" as poet Billy Collins would admonish us for doing. We do need to look below the surface of what we read to become critical readers and thinkers.

First we need to gain knowledge of the critical theories that will be employed in analyzing *Little Red Riding Hood*.

Pre-critical: This is not really a theory of literary criticism so much as the basic groundwork that must be done before any theory can be employed. A pre-critical reading is one that identifies the basics of plot, theme, character, setting, tone, atmosphere and the like. All readers, no matter how sophisticated, or unsophisticated, must read at this level if what they read is to make any sense.

Formalist: A formal critic is one who seeks to understand the text by identifying the various literary and rhetorical devices that are employed. The critic goes on to explain how the author uses these devices to add meaning and richness to the work. Formal critics will pay attention not just to the use of imagery or metaphor in a work, for example, but how these images and metaphors form patterns of meaning throughout the work. They will also pay attention to how the words sound together and how techniques from one genre (poetry, for example) are used to enrich a work written in another genre (prose, for example). This is what the Advance Placement English Literature Exam is asking you to do on the Poetry Essay (Q1) and the Prose Essay (Q2).

Mythological / Archetypal: This approach to literature assumes that there is a collection of symbols, images, characters, and motifs (i.e. **archetypes**) that evokes basically the same response in all people. According to the psychologist Carl **Jung**, mankind possesses a **"collective unconscious"** that contains these archetypes and that is common to all of humanity. For Jung this explains how similar myths developed among groups of people that had no known contact with each other and also explains why they remain important to storytellers to the present day. A mythological critic might read a novel like *The Great Gatsby* and show how it is really just a sophisticated retelling of the story of

"Beauty and the Beast" or how the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* is a modern retelling of an initiation quest found in the myths and rituals of various cultures around the world. Myth critics identify these archetypal patterns and discuss how they function in the works. They believe that these archetypes are the source of much of literature's power.

Psychological: These critics view works through the lens of psychology. They look either at the psychological motivations of the characters or of the authors themselves, although the former is generally considered a more respectable approach.

Freudian Approach: A Freudian approach often includes pinpointing the influences of a character's *id* (the instinctual, pleasure seeking part of the mind), *superego* (the part of the mind that represses the id's impulses) and the *ego* (the part of the mind that controls but does not repress the id's impulses, releasing them in a healthy way). Freudian critics like to point out the sexual implications of symbols and imagery, since Freud's believed that all human behavior is motivated by sexuality. They tend to see concave images, such as ponds, flowers, cups, and caves as female symbols; whereas objects that are longer than they are wide are usually seen as phallic symbols. Dancing, riding, and flying are associated with sexual pleasure. Water is usually associated with birth, the female principle, the maternal, the womb, and the death wish. Freudian critics occasionally discern the presence of an ***Oedipus complex*** (a boy's unconscious rivalry with his father for the love of his mother) in the male characters of certain works, such as Hamlet.

Jungian Approach: Jung is also an influential force in myth (archetypal) criticism. Psychological critics are generally concerned with his concept of the process of *individuation* (the process of discovering what makes one different form everyone else). Jung labeled three parts of the self: the *shadow*, or the darker, unconscious self (usually the villain in literature); the *persona*, or a man's social personality (usually the hero); and the *anima*, or a man's "soul image" (usually the heroine). A *neurosis* occurs when someone fails to assimilate one of these unconscious components into his conscious and *projects* it on someone else. The persona must be flexible and be able to balance the components of the psyche.

Feminist: A feminist critic sees cultural and economic disabilities in a "patriarchal" society that have hindered or prevented women from realizing their creative possibilities and women's cultural identification as merely a negative object, or "Other," to man as the defining and dominating "Subject." There are several assumptions and concepts held in common by most feminist critics.

1. Our civilization is pervasively patriarchal.
2. The concepts of gender" are largely, if not entirely, cultural constructs, effected by the omnipresent patriarchal bias of our civilization.
3. This patriarchal ideology also pervades those writings that have been considered great literature. Such works lack autonomous female role models, are implicitly addressed to male readers, and leave the alien outsider or else solicit her to identify against herself by assuming male values and ways of perceiving, feeling, and acting.

Feminists often argue that male fears are portrayed through female characters. Under this theory you would focus on the relationships between genders by examining the patterns of thought, behavior, values, enfranchisement, and power in relations between the sexes.

Marxist: A Marxist critic grounds theory and practice on the economic and cultural theory of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, especially on the following claims:

1. The evolving history of humanity, its institutions and its ways of thinking are determined by the changing mode of its "material production"—that is, of its basic economic organization.
2. Historical changes in the fundamental mode of production effect essential changes both in the constitution and power relations of social classes.
3. Human consciousness in any era is constituted by an ideology—that is, a set of concepts, beliefs, values and a way of thinking and feeling through which humans perceive and explain what they take to be reality. A Marxist critic typically undertakes to "explain" the literature of any era by revealing the economic, class, and ideological determinants of the way an author writes, and examine the relation of the text to the social reality of that time and place.

This school of critical theory focuses on power and money in works of literature. Who has the power/ money? Who does not? What happens as a result? For example, it could be said that *Wuthering Heights* is about how love cannot survive a difference in class. Heathcliff and Catherine's love is destroyed because Hindley has placed Heathcliff so low that it would "degrade" Catherine to marry him as much as she loves him, thus she "betrays [her] own heart" to marry Edgar who has the class and wealth to elevate Catherine. Young Catherine and Hareton's love is only possible when she raises him up to her class with literacy and because they inherit Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange upon Heathcliff's death

Historical: Historical / Biographical critics see works as the reflection of an author's life and times (or of the characters' life and times). They believe it is necessary to know about the author and the political, economical, and sociological context of his times in order to truly understand his works. Using this theory requires that you apply to a text a specific historical information about the time during which an author wrote. History, in this case, refers to the social, political, economic, cultural, and or intellectual climate of the time. For example, William Faulkner wrote many of his novels and stories during and after World War II, which helps explain the feeling of darkness, defeat, and struggle that pervade much of his work.

Reader-Response: These critics place their focus on the reader rather than text. Rather than looking for a definitive reading of a text they are interested in readers' responses to the text, how they *experience* the text. Some would argue that in trying to dig out hidden meanings in a text the enjoyment of the text is lost as is its effect on the life of the reader. Reading is a creative act and as a text only provides the words the reader's imagination must supply the images and make the applications of the text's meaning to her or his own life experience. For some reader-response critics the text is re-authored each time it is read and no two people read the same text in exactly the same way, they do not author the same book. There is also inherent in this critical approach a desire to return ecstasy, awe, and wonder to our reading of literature. Because each reader responds to the text differently this analysis is left blank so that each reader can create her or his own literary response to the text. As you examine the packet, write your own response to the text and images you read and see.

A LONG time ago, in a house near a wood,
As most pretty histories go,
A nice little girl lived, called Red Riding Hood,
As some of us already know.
One day said her mother, "Get ready, my dear,
"And take to your granny some cakes,
And a bottle of wine to soothe her
And ask after her pains and aches.
Set out before it gets hot
And when you are on your journey,
Walk nicely and quietly, not off like a shot.
Do not run off the path along the way,
Or you may end up falling and break the wine pot."

Pre-critical: This is the story of a little girl who is being sent out on her own on a journey. The implication that this might be a quest is presented; which means that self-knowledge will be the outcome. The illustration shows the mother as both comforting as she encircles the girl and intimidating as she points out her path in both an authoritative and warning manner.

Formalist: "A long time ago," a traditional opening for a fairy tale, suggests immediately a world of fantasy and that we are reading a story that will contain a moral. Much of the language is focused on the mother giving the daughter directions on not only where to go but how to go. The fact that the mother has to give so many directions suggests that our heroine has difficulty conforming. Her mother's wish that she leave before it gets "hot" along with the red color of her cloak suggests that Red Riding Hood might be a passionate character.

Mythological/ Archetypal: In the opening we are introduced to the archetypal mother. She represents life, nourishment, nurture, warmth, and protection. The fact that she commands the daughter to stay on "the path" suggests that she takes on the role of mentor as her daughter/ pupil begins on a journey that is not simply to deliver goodies, but that she is on a path to maturity and self knowledge. The mother and archetypal wise woman is sending Red Riding Hood to her mother who once guided her on the right path to take in life.

Psychological: Even though Red Riding Hood is presenting herself submissively to her, the fact that the mother feels the need to warn her to stay on the path suggests that Red Riding Hood may be a bit rebellious as the red color of her cloak implies.

Feminist: The illustration shows both Red Riding Hood and her mother wearing aprons, which suggests time spent doing traditional female activities of cleaning and cooking, and a stereotypical concern to keep their clothing and thus appearance attractive. No father is present or mentioned; however, the mother's concern that Red Riding Hood stays on "the path" and be careful not to break open the wine bottle indicates a patriarchal fear of the maiden being compromised and sullied by an outside world full of amorous males. She is also given instructions by her mother on how to present herself in a proper feminine fashion; "walk nicely and quietly" and stay on "the path."

Marxist: This tale is already setting up the beginning of a lesson. Red Riding Hood is being told how to follow the rules of society. She has a place and she must stay in it. However, she is wearing a red riding hood. The fact that it is red suggests a desire to stand out and not be subjugated by class also it is s "riding" coat indicating that she has a desire to be a rider as the bourgeoisie or upper class would be able to do.

Historical: In France in the 1600's, when the version originated that gave the main character a red riding hood, clothing codes were strictly enforced. For a village girl like Little Red Riding Hood to wear a "red riding hood" made her a nonconformist. Thus the wearing of the red cap sets up Little Red Riding Hood as not doing what one should.

Out set Riding Hood, so obliging and sweet,
And she met a great Wolf in the wood,
Who begun most politely the maiden to greet.
In as tender a voice as he could
He asked in what house she was going and why;
Red Riding Hood answered him all:
He said, "Give my love to your Gran; I will try
At my earliest leisure to call."

Pre-critical: This is Red Riding Hood' first meeting with the Woolf. His human like stance and the wearing of a cloak that mimics the look of sheep's wool makes us wonder about the intentions of a 'wolf in sheep's clothing.' While his words are polite and tender, the wolf's garb and how he leans into her space implies that he may pose danger—the danger Red Riding Hood's mother has warned her about.

Formalist: Red Riding Hood is "obliging" in listening and the Wolf is "tender" in speaking with her. A connection is being made and the fact that Red Riding Hood tells him "all" indicates that she is surrendering to him. His familiarity in asking her to give his "love" to her grandmother and his promise to call on her as soon as he can also illustrates an intimacy between the two of them.

Mythological/ Archetypal: The fact that this seduction by the wolf is occurring under a tree connects it with the devil's seduction of Eve in the Garden of Eden. Red Riding Hood is our Eve who is being tempted into knowledge of good and evil. Instead of following the orders of her mother (creator) she has been tempted to stop. The question is will she stay on the path or make take a bite from the proverbial apple and make her own choices.

Psychological: Eye contact is very important in the Wolf/maiden intimacy of this moment. The *shadow*, or the darker, unconscious self, our wolf villain and the heroine, the *anima*, or a man's "soul image" gaze into each others eyes. Their eyes (I) are on the same plane, and they mirror each other with the casually crossed arms. The Wolf is anamorphized and friendly as if he had been waiting for her. The implication is that they are connected.

Feminist: An intimate gaze has been established but the wood staff separates them. This phallic symbol draws a clear line between them—one is masculine and one is feminine. The desires of the unconsciousness will not be fulfilled as the woodcutters; the moral guardians of the patriarchal system keep watch from the background.

Marxist: The fact that Red Riding Hood and the Wolf meet in the forest a place without society and its social designations means that they can meet as equals; however, the finer garb of Red Riding Hood's cloak suggests that she is attempting to associate herself with a higher class than the wolf or the two woodcutters who look on and inadvertently act as protectors.

Historical: Perrault and the Grimm versions of this tale were written with an upper class audience in mind, and so by dressing the Wolf in peasants clothing they signal that their audience is not to be associated with the wolf and his possibly nefarious intentions.

Off he ran, and Red Riding Hood went on her way,
But often she lingered and played,
And made as she went quite a pretty nosegay
With the wild flowers that grew in the glade.
So as she ran from the path (against which she had been warned)
Looking for flowers farther than she should.
With each one, she saw a still prettier one for which she yearned
And so got deeper and deeper into the wood.

Pre-critical: As the Wolf exits he reverts to his animal persona by running off on all fours, and now Red Riding Hood has moved lower to the ground as well giving into her desires rather than staying on the path.

Formalist: Red Riding Hood lingers and looks collecting flowers giving into the pleasures of the senses rather than staying on her mission to her grandmother. Her quest is in jeopardy because she seems to by yearning for something she cannot find. Her love of "wild flowers" indicates a desire to be as wild and free as the flowers she is collecting.

Mythological / Archetypal: Like Narcissus Red Riding Hood has fallen in love with her own image—the image of herself that she sees metaphorically reflected in the flowers. The danger is that like Narcissus she will fall to her doom.

Psychological: The Wolf acts as her Id and represents her desires. After meeting him, she no longer walks purposefully, but lingers and plays. The Wolf by stopping her has enlightened her to the sensory (sensual) pleasures that are just beyond the well-worn path, the flowers. The path is her conscious or knowable mind, while the woods representing her unconscious also symbolize all that she has yet to explore.

Feminist: Free from the watchful eyes of the woodcutters, Red Riding Hood is able to make her own decisions. She is no longer a bud but has become a blooming flower. She is becoming a woman and running off the path designated by a patriarchal society that wishes her to be a good girl.

Marxist: Free from the watchful eyes of society and no longer concerned with manners or class, Red Riding Hood lowers herself to the ground, the earth. She enjoys the true worth of the land rather than the trappings of society. It is wild flowers that intrigue her and even the Wolf begins to remove the trapping of class, his peasant clothes.

Historical: Grimm's version was based on Perrault's tale that saw female independence as a dangerous thing. The Grimm's were influenced by the fear of foreign invasion as a result of the Franco-Prussian war. These elements serve to illustrate that Red Riding Hood is moving into dangerous terrain by leaving the safe path of society.

But in the meanwhile the Wolf went, with a grin,
At the Grandmother's cottage to call;
He knocked at the door, and was told to come in,
Then he ate her up—sad cannibal!
Then the Wolf shut the door, and got into bed,
And waited for Red Riding Hood;
When he heard her soft tap at the front door, he said,
Speaking softly as ever he could:

Pre-critical: The grandmother appears weak and vulnerable and is enveloped in white suggesting purity and possibly the paleness of death. The wolf appears more menacing as if he is trying to scratch down the door. A human persona seems more out of place than it did in his interaction with Red Riding Hood.

Formalist: The knock at the door is the knock of death. The grandmother has two lines of life before the Wolf eats her up in the fourth line. The description of him as a cannibal is telling. How can an animal eating a human be a cannibalistic act? The Wolf is not just an animal he is the animal side of our human nature.

Mythological / Archetypal: The grandmother has failed to fulfill the role of the wise woman. The spinning wheel echoes the idea of the three fates spinning the length of our life. One spins (the grandmother), one measures (the mother) and one cuts it (Red Riding Hood). By Red Riding Hood's indiscreet disclosure to the Wolf she has cut short her Grandmother's life. It is left to see if her grandchild will have the maturity to act as the heroine and save her own life or if she will become the virgin sacrifice to this Wolf's desires.

Psychological: The Wolf as humanity's animal instincts and specifically man's instinct to hunt women is clearly shown. The grandmother as an older non-fertile woman deserves little attention. The waiting and work for the nubile young girl is the primary focus of this wolfish being.

Feminist: The Wolf's easy and brutal disposal of the grandmother illustrates the lack of value that a male dominated society places on older women who are no longer attractive or able to bear children. The attempt to feminize, speak "softly" as he can to Red Riding Hood is an attempt to lure a naïve young woman into his dominating male clutches. It mimics the act of seduction.

Marxist: The grandmother while weak has still attempted to be a useful member of society as the industry of her spinning wheel suggests. The disposal of her by the Wolf illustrates the danger of individualism. The Wolf wants something, something that is not good for the collective society. In order to gain it he must destroy the communal good.

Historical: The height of the witch hunts were just calming down when Perrault began to write down his version of this previously oral tale. Older women, who were seen as a burden on society, were often targeted as witches and killed. The grandmother, who seems bedridden, echoes this. The fact that many versions of the tale present the grandmother as the creator of Red Riding Hood's red cloak also connects her with the idea of witches corrupting others.

"Who is there?"
"It is I, your dear grandchild; I've brought
Some wine and nice little cakes."
"Pull the bobbin[1], my child, and come in as you ought;
I'm in bed very bad with my aches."
When she entered the room, the old Woolf hid himself
Very carefully (such was his plan):
"Put your basket and things, little dear on the shelf,
And come into bed to your Gran,"

[1]*device consisting of a short bar and a length of string, used to control a wooden door latch*

Pre-critical: Red Riding Hood's far from innocent now her direct gaze indicates that her journey has matured her. The wolf prints on the stoop illustrate a danger beyond the door that Red Riding Hood is oblivious to.

Formalist: Red Riding Hood's declarative statement, "It is I" and characterizing herself as her grandmother's "dear grandchild" illustrates the confidence she has gained as a result of her journey.

Mythological / Archetypal: This lack of awareness of the danger facing her signals 'The Fall' for Red Riding Hood: a descent in action from a higher to a lower state of being, an experience which might involve defilement, moral imperfection, and/or loss of innocence. This fall is often accompanied by expulsion from a kind of paradise as penalty for disobedience and/or moral transgression.

Psychological: The door in the picture remains closed, but the text clearly shows that Red Riding Hood has opened a door to enter into what she believes is the safe domain of her grandmother. The Wolf's request that she not only enter but "come into bed to your Gran" demonstrates the male desire to lure young women into bed. The fact that Red Riding Hood is wearing a red cloak and has wine (a red liquid) suggest a complicity in this attempt by the Wolf—an attempt of seduction or perhaps rape.

Feminist: Red Riding Hood's assertive and level stare illustrate her desire to be the equal to a man as she authoritatively knocks on the door. However, this image makes it clear that an obedient downcast feminine gaze, as she displayed in the first image of the story, would have alerted her to the impending danger, signaled by the wolf prints on the stoop. Red Riding Hood is being punished for her independence.

Marxist: The fact that Red Riding Hood is bringing her grandmother indulgent treats such as wine and nice little cakes shows a concern with the trappings of the bourgeoisie class rather than providing good nourishing staples such as buttermilk and bread. This again demonstrates that the intended audience for this tale is an upper class reader.

Historical: The fact that the grandmother has to tell her how to open the door indicates that the door is usually barred and must be opened by the grandmother. This unconsciously echoes the fears experienced at the time the Grimm brothers were composing this tale—the fear of foreign invaders (symbolized by the Wolf) getting in and attacking them.

The obedient child laid herself down by the side
Of her Grandmother dear (as she thought):
But all at once, "Granny!" Red Riding Hood cried,
"What, very long arms you have got!"
He answered, "The better to hug you, my child."
"But, Granny, what very large ears!"
"The better to hear you," the voice was still mild,
But the little girl hid her fears.
"Grandmother, you have very large eyes!"
"The better to see you, I trow[2]."
"What great teeth you have got!" and the wicked Wolf cries,
"The better to eat you up now!"

[2] *(verb) to think, believe, or trust*

Pre-critical: Although the text makes it clear that the interaction between the Wolf and Red Riding Hood occurs with Red Riding Hood in bed, the image places Red Riding Hood across the room. She is also removing her red cloak as if to symbolically remove her seductive persona.

Formalist: Throughout the dialogue in which Red Riding Hood is laying down next to the Wolf that she believes is her grandmother, we begin to question her gullibility. She points out how all of his protruding parts (arms, ears, teeth) are so big. She also comments on his large eyes

Mythological / Archetypal: Now that Red Riding Hood is finally faced with her fate in a place that should be a refuge she is confronted with 'the creature of nightmare' – this monster, is both physical and abstract, is summoned from the deepest, darkest parts of the human psyche (the inference is it is from Red Riding Hood's psyche) to threaten her life, implying that she is culpable for her own attack.

Psychological: If the Wolf is the *shadow*, or the darker, unconscious self, the villain and the heroine, is the *anima*, or a man's "soul image." Then it is the unconscious desires of men (the hero's villainous side) to seduce and control women that are being illustrated through Red Riding Hood's predicament. She becomes an image of lust for the male reader and a warning to the female reader.

Feminist: The comments on arms, ears, teeth, and eyes being large and the Wolf's response that these attribute will better allow him to take her in by holding, hearing, seeing and ultimately eating her illustrates the culture of male domination and perhaps even brutal domination of rape prevalent in patriarchal societies.

Marxist: Her obedience and conforming to authority even when it is threatening is illustrated by the removal of her red cloak. That fact that she lays down as commanded but still questions shows that oppressed groups must question and protest dictatorial ways.

Historical: This ready obedience of Red Riding Hood illustrates the developing middle class value being placed on the obedient behavior of children.

Red Riding Hood shrieked, and—bang! off went a gun
And shot the old Wolf through the head:
One howl and one moan, one kick and one groan,
And the wicked old rascal was dead.
Some sportsman (he certainly was a dead shot)
Had aimed at the Wolf when she cried;
So Red Riding Hood got safe home—did she not?
And lived happily there till she died.

Pre-critical: Red Riding Hood is back where she started. A protective and authoritative figure envelopes her and points out the dangers of life (the Wolf) as her mother pointed authoritatively for her to stay on the correct path.

Formalist: The only language that Red Riding Hood gets, after her previously talkative questioning of the Wolf, is a shriek and a cry. Her failed attempt at independence has failed and now she is even denied a voice.

Mythological / Archetypal: Red Riding Hood is no longer the quester. She has failed 'the initiation' and her 'journey' that led to maturity has resulted in her experiencing 'the fall.' She is no longer the hero of her own story. She has become the 'damsel in distress'—a vulnerable woman must be rescued by the hero.

Psychological: The red cloak is no where in the sight and as in the first image Red Riding Hood is now Little Red Riding Hood again. She is diminished and clutches at the man's label as if begging to be protected in an embrace from a father figure. As a father has been missing through the entire story the implication is that the Red Riding Hood has been seeking a father figure and that is why the Wolf is almost successful in his attack.

Feminist: Red Riding Hood has not fought her own battle. Instead she has been saved at the last minute by a man, a man carrying a phallic weapon symbolizing his power and her vulnerability to the dangers offered by the world. She has learned her lesson and will now stay on the right path. Whether this path, dictated by a patriarchal society, will bring happiness is left questionable

Marxist: The strong can either protect or oppress the weak, and the implication is that all those oppressed must rise up or they will live at the whims of those both evil and strong and benevolent and strong.

Historical: The strong protective man with the gun illustrates how palpable the fear has been historically of wolves in Europe. During harsh winters and in times of conflict wolves were pushed into the places where humanity lived to find food. There are even reports of wolves roaming the streets of Paris during particularly lean times. The killing of the Wolf illustrates this prejudice and why wolves were hunted to near extinction in Europe. Conversely wolves were seen as symbols of strength and for this hunter to overcome the Wolf sends a message of male dominance of nature that was developing through the 1700s and 1800s.

Moral of the Tale

Pre-Critical: The story points out the consequences of attempting independence and individuality. Good little girls, do not stray from the path. Dangerous things can happen.

Formalist: Language is used more for description. Looking is important in this story. Most of the dialogue are commands directed at her, and when she is most vocal is at the point when she is in the most danger. Illustrating the desire for children to be seen and not heard.

Mythological/ Archetypal: In this story we see the archetypal hero-quest of initiation. The quest follows the three step archetypal pattern of the initiation quest: 1) separation, 2) transformation, and 3) return. But it is a quest whose 'return' is a return to conformity to patriarchal and middle class ideals. Little Red Riding Hood ends the tale with no voice, diminished in size by the looming force of the hunter, and divested of her red hood.

Psychological: The message of this story is that if one is to achieve safety in life she or he must not take risks and instead accept the guidance of those older and wiser. Failure to stay on the right path determined by society can lead into danger as shown by the woods and what happens to Red Riding Hood's grandmother and what almost happens to her.

Feminist: Red Riding Hood has the mind and desire to seek independence, but not the means to secure of protect it. She questions the Wolf, but cannot fight him off due to a patriarchal society which tells her to respect her elders and has led her to get in to the bed with the Wolf, thus putting her in a vulnerable situation. She does not have a gun or the masculine strength associated with it.

Marxist: Little Red Riding Hood's attempt for power of the upper class is stripped away as her red hood and cloak have been. Those that seek to challenge society will be punished or destroyed by it. She is rendered voiceless at the end of the tale represented voiceless oppressed.

Historical: The Wolf and the vulnerable Little Red Riding Hood illustrates the times in which this tale was standardized by the Brothers Grimm. The Grimm's were influenced by the fear of foreign invasion as a result of the Franco-Prussian war. Little Red Riding Hood represents the vulnerability of the everyday people "the volk" during this time of war and uncertainty.

Reader-Response: _____

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A Musical Analysis of the Transformations of The Baker and The Baker's Wife in Stephen Sondheim's Into the Woods

Colin Sanders

Abstract

The purpose of this essay is to analyze the conductor's score of Stephen Sondheim's two-act musical and explicate the personalities of the Baker and the Baker's Wife. Through harmonic progression, careful use of specific keys, instrumentation, and musical motif, the transformations of the music describes the parallel changes to the protagonists on stage, and can be used to find the overarching meaning of the couple in the context of the play. The analysis of Act I consists of an exposition of the characters, a compare and contrast of two similar numbers, and a final look into the synthesis of the respective styles of the Baker and his wife that define their relationship throughout the act. The breakdown of Act II is completed in separate analyses: the first of the fate of the Baker through partial harmonic degeneration, and the second of the death of the Baker's Wife due to the acceptance of a style that is not her own. When combined, the investigation attempts to form the perspective and intentions of Stephen Sondheim as he wrote the music. Specifically, an emphasis is placed on the importance of love and the consequences of its betrayal, as opposed to the traditional opinion regarding feminism and sexism in the play.

Word Count: 207

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In the two-act musical, Into the Woods, composer Stephen Sondheim significantly uses orchestration to develop the characters in addition to the more obvious dramatic devices, such as dialogue and plot. Although one can directly observe the transformation of several of the key players in Into the Woods, it is through an exhaustive analysis of the score where one can truly see how these dramatic transformations are embedded in the music. As primary examples, the Baker and the Baker's Wife are extremely complex characters that can only be fully represented with their respective music. Furthermore, through musical compare and contrast, the different personalities of the Baker and his wife can be explicated to explain their individual fates.

In Act I, the Baker and the Baker's Wife are introduced adjacent to one another. Although it is immediately evident that the connection between the two protagonists is quite important, the music of the Act I Opening presents a subtle conflict between them that contradicts any first impressions of love, unity, or dependence. The best example of such a first impression is the very nomenclature of 'Baker's Wife'. Its impression on the audience is that the Baker is more important; the same as if "Hansel and Gretel" had been instead titled "Hansel and Hansel's Sister". Henceforth springs the Baker's initial pride. The conflict created by this pride is paralleled by the musical tension and disorder that Sondheim creates as the Baker and his wife appear on the set. The unison entrance of "I wish…" is accompanied by the bassoon and the clarinet, creating a subtle difference in timbre that somewhat differentiates the two voices. As Part 1 of the Opening continues, the rhythmical entrances of each character alternate between unison and solo patches, emphasizing a slight disunity that is enhanced with simultaneous chord alternation. For example, the Baker and his wife sing independently whenever the Bmi7 chord is being emphasized; a switch to a CMA7 precedes the unison of "More than life…"; and again a Bmi7 chord repeats as they sing one after the other, transitioning to a Dmi7 chord for a slightly

darker tone. The brighter major sevenths and unisons alternating with darker minor sevenths and lyric syncopation in the first part of the opening serve to expose the imperfect relationship of the Baker and his wife (Sondheim).

The Act I Opening does not center itself on the couple again until Part 8, where the key and chord progression are both modulated a half step down from the beginning of the musical. Here, the dialogue consists of an argument that reflects upon the fickle pride of the Baker, in which he dismisses his wife from the adventure to obtain his child. Simultaneously, the new key is darker than the original simply by relativity; the addition of the synthesizer to the chord repetition warms the timbre; and the dynamic of the music has been lowered from mezzo-piano to piano, making the background music sound more like an echo of a struggle than a call to the woods. Throughout Part 8, the Baker and his wife sing rhythmically independent of one another, and chromatic steps build up throughout the chords as they prepare to leave the safety of their cottage. These dissonant devices build up not only to Part 9 but also emphasize the conflict between the Baker and the Baker's Wife that is now explicit in the dialogue.

Hence, the first impressions and portraits presented by the Opening of the musical define the Baker and his wife as "an ordinary rooted couple from Brooklyn who get drawn into a magic world" (Holden). In layman's terms, this is a typical couple with their disagreements: the man with his pride, and the woman with indignant inferiority. The next musical appearance of either character is in a short underscore just before meeting Jack and buying 'the cow as white as milk'. Here, the conflict is simply further explicated. The key, F# major, is enharmonic to the previous appearance in G flat major, literally echoing Act I Opening, Part 8; and before the Baker's Wife actually enters, a tense and continuous G#mi(add b5, #5) chord mirrors the Baker's fears and confusions alone in the woods. The repetition of the key foreshadows the conflict, and the

Baker's Wife appears on the scene; the ensuing dialogue is backed by soft chromatic build up, where a single chord is repeated as one note is incremented by half or whole steps each measure to create dissonance in an otherwise bright BMA9 chord. There is also a clarinet solo that is strung smoothly in with the Baker's Wife's singing; this is a contrast to the almost grouchy bassoon nature of the Baker which again appears as they sing one after the other, as a conversation rather than a duet. This underscore serves to reiterate the innate conflict just before a turning point in the plot, where they obtain the first of four crucial items towards getting their wish (Sondheim).

This innate conflict seems to have no explicit basis up until this turning point, where Sondheim finally reveals the personality clash between the Baker and his wife. The songs "Maybe They're Magic" and "Baker's Reprise" serve to directly compare the two protagonists and provide vital insight into both characters that compliments the lyrics. In the former, the Baker's Wife has her first solo part, and she enters at a 'moderate' pace in the key of B major. B major is commonly referred to as "the key of wild passions" (Steblin); this compliments her motivated, outgoing, and changeable self as seen in this number. She begins backed by legato strings, and an occasional French horn entrance. These create a warm, endearing tone as she alluringly appeals to the Baker. This tone transitions suddenly to staccato, alla marcia chords as her insistence and confidence build into one of the Baker's Wife's most operatic, a cappella moments of the musical. On its own, "Maybe They're Magic" points to the extroverted confidence of the Baker's Wife, as well as her fluctuating personality. However, inspection of "Baker's Reprise" shortly afterward in the play reveals it to be the musical antithesis of "Maybe They're Magic". The lyrics' melody, the basic I-VI chord progression, and tempo acceleration throughout the reprise directly parallel the exposition of the Baker's Wife, while the differences

serve to expose the solitary nature of the Baker, as this is the first time he is given a number alone as well. The first contrast is the style difference: while his wife begins ‘moderately’, signifying control of her own pace, he begins singing ‘*in pain*’ and ‘Rubato’. Secondly, his music is played only by pizzicato violins, as opposed to legato, smooth strings with warm pedal tones. Both of these give the impression that he is indecisive, unsure, and less fixated on his task than his wife. This is again reinforced by the multiple caesuras in his melodic line.

Although he is evidently less confident than his wife, the Baker *is* able to resolve himself, as the music obtains “Piú mosso” and finally truncates. A closer comparison is necessary to explain this occurrence: for example, instrumentation analysis reveals that while almost the entire backdrop for the “Baker’s Reprise” is pizzicato strings, the parallel music for the Baker’s Wife involves every scored instrument playing a part in interwoven melodies and rhythms. Additionally, the Baker’s final bar of singing is accompanied by single note patterns, while the equivalent bar in “Maybe They’re Magic” contains fully dictated chords; the Baker’s Wife then continues, while the conclusion for the Baker is almost carelessly left to the orchestra. The conclusion of this comparison is that the Baker’s resolve is incredibly simpler than his wife’s. To reinforce this idea, “Baker’s Reprise” is in the key of F major, often known as “the key of complaisance and calm” (Steblin). While the Baker’s Wife is dramatic, complex, and decisive, the Baker can only resolve his self-conflict to a certain degree of simplicity, as shown by the chord and instrumentation comparisons. This means that the Baker is a very simplistic character underneath his desires to complete the quest for a child on his own. Furthermore, while the antithesis of the two musical numbers is indicative of many character traits, “Baker’s Reprise” comes chronologically second due to its dependence on “Maybe They’re Magic”. The basic chord, rhythm, and form patterns throughout both numbers are nearly identical; thus, the

framework for the Baker's resolution of conflict has been set by his wife's resolution of conflict (Sondheim). The pattern here introduces the idea that the Baker is unknowingly dependent upon his wife to resolve his self-conflicts and insecurities.

Thus far, the music of the play has introduced the Baker as a man who, in attempting to get his wish, has been in conflict with his wife because of his attempts at independence. However, on his own in an underscore and in "Baker's Reprise", he becomes confused and disoriented until his wife's personality and mindset resolve his self-conflict. Likewise, the music of the first act establishes the Baker's Wife as an excitable, decisive character whose importance is not yet fully appreciated. Arguably, the Baker and his wife are like two puzzle pieces that have only been fitted together on the wrong sides. With this analogy in mind, the characters have been musically foreshadowed to fit together correctly. In terms of the plot, the expositions of the characters call for a climatic duet where the Baker accepts the fact that he cannot get his wish on his own and the Baker's Wife finally presents her love for the Baker undiminished by his pride.

Coincidentally, "It Takes Two" is the resulting synergy in the musical where the Baker and the Baker's Wife finally unite in the realization that their dependence is necessary. In the most general sense, the plot-complimenting form of this piece is *ababc*, where *a* is the Baker's Wife's music, *b* is the Baker's music, and *c* is a duet between them and the synthesis of both musical styles. This is a climax in the form of the music, which parallels a climax in character development. The Baker's Wife opens the number in Bb major, the "key of cheerful love" (Steblin), reflecting her happiness as well as endearing to the Baker. Her introduction is smooth with many slurs, a tempo fluctuation, and the plain, warm tone of the lower half of a piano. In the second half of her melodic line, there is a beautiful, more complex chord progression of vi7-vi2-IV-ii(6/5), holding a pedal tone and continuing a steady quarter-note pulse that lets the music

flow while giving it a sustained, more emotional style. These characteristics reflect the best of her musical personality: variance, complexity, and passion. It is interesting to note that in order to emphasize the newfound pure connection between the Baker and his Wife, the transitions between sections of this number are quite smooth. As an example, the end of the first segment involves the quarter note pulse of the music characteristic to the Baker's Wife gradually picking up triplet anacrusis, as the bass pedal tone begins to lift into an anacrusis on beat 4 as well. As the Baker picks up where his wife left off, the triplets flow into '*swing eighths*', and the bass continues its rhythm while changing its articulation to staccato. While the shorter notes here pattern the Baker's previous musical background, overall it seems that the Baker has musically changed drastically with his acceptance of his wife's role from hesitance to decisive freestyle. Using his wife's style for framework, the Baker finally realizes that his individualism can only be achieved ironically through dependence. The most significant characteristic of his new style is Sondheim's first use of a mode: G flat mixolydian. This mode transitions from the indecisive key of G flat that recurs in the Opening and "Baker's Reprise" into a mode that gives the music a bluesy tone, almost exhibiting embarrassment and subtly changing the Baker's musical infrastructure (Comp). His individualism is also reinforced by the swing eighths which are also uncharacteristic to the musical thus far; these notes are additionally played by the flute and clarinet, both of which are not characteristic to the instrumentation of the Baker. The integration of woodwinds into the music further hints at the acceptance of his wife's style, and yet the Baker's basic simplicity is still evident in the overall chord progression: the chord progression of the Baker's first solo is a repetitive oscillation between two chords, usually a fourth apart (Sondheim).

In the second half of “It Takes Two”, the styles of the Baker and his wife become more distinct, and finally combine. The Baker’s Wife’s music incorporates the bassoon of the Baker in evermore frequent triplet anacrusis as she repeats her melody from the beginning of the song with fuller chords. The Baker again seems to nearly change style completely, singing in D Lydian while his music makes use of various techniques such as secondary dominance and syncopation that are not characteristic to his original style. His backdrop begins with quarter note staccatos with which he has previously been associated, and transitions to slurred eighths that accompany rich chromatic, secondary dominant progressions to D major. These all reflect the newfound complexity of his personality that comes directly from association with his wife, while his wife is evidently able to express herself without being repressed by the Baker’s pride. Finally, at the end of his second solo, the Baker transitions into a duet with his wife in “the key of triumph”, D major (Steblin).

The climax of the song occurs when the first harmony of the musical is sung as the styles of the Baker and his wife combine brilliantly into the most powerful four measures of the entire musical. The long, minor seventh pedal tones of the strings, the triplet anacrusis by the characteristic instruments i.e. clarinet and bassoon, the pulsing staccato quarter notes, and the vi7-vi2-V/IV-ii7 progression all synthesize at the highest dynamic level of the song to compliment the vocal harmony of moving thirds and produce the perfect music to represent a perfect relationship. This climax and synergy is the ultimate representation of the triumph of love in the Baker’s life as well as his wife’s: the initial conflict of pride and love is resolved because the Baker realizes who he is without his wife. Furthermore, the love that finally brings them together is what causes the musical epiphany as well as the plot epiphany soon to follow: the couple succeeds in obtaining the items needed for a child. Thus, through compare and contrast

the first act of Into the Woods presents the Baker as simplistic and fragile, yet loving and adaptive; simultaneously the Baker's Wife is passionate and independent, yet restrained. Once lost in the woods, the Baker realizes and allows the dependence between them, and is finally cured of hesitance and insecurity, while his wife finally is able to express herself: it is this transformation that is best represented in the music, and shows love to be the driving force of both characters.

As conclusive as the first act is, the second act has more to say about the real world. Sondheim was known to incorporate prominent social issues into his works, and Into the Woods is no exception. Unfortunately, the portrayal of marriage in the first act, however touching and idyllic, does not seem to parallel the actual relationships in society today. After using musical dexterity and manipulation to transform the defective into the perfect, Sondheim proceeds in the second act to sharply contrast a utopia with a dystopia.

The Baker and his wife are two unique characters of the play in this sense: the second act is not a continuation of the first, but rather a separate entity as another book on the shelf. This effect is not evident in the plot alone, but only explicable by the musical repetition. For contrast, it is evident through the Act II Opening dialogue that all the characters still wish for more than they have gained in the first act. The music, however, reveals a significant separation between the Baker, his wife, and the other characters: the unyielding presence of conflict. Cinderella's conflict with her family has vanished; Jack has newfound peace with his mother; and even though the Witch has become more hostile to Rapunzel, it is crucial to notice that her conflict came into existence at the close of the first act. With this context in mind, the Act II Opening, Part 1 orchestration is far too similar to that of Act I. Indeed, the music of the other characters reflects another wish; but the entrance of the Baker and his wife is evidence that their state of

conflict has not changed as the other characters' has. The rhythmic alternation, the clarinet and bassoon doubling voices, and the cries of the baby create the same tension that existed between the Baker and his wife initially; hence, the personality clash has returned, and it seems as if the story is starting anew for these two characters.

Progressing into Part 2, the conflict between the Baker and the Baker's Wife is much worse in harmonic analysis than it was in Part 8 of the Act 1 Opening. One underscore in particular as they speak calmly foreshadows something much worse than an argument: everything seems to fluctuate. The tempo slows, then returns to 'A tempo, poco rubato' and finally loses all sense of rubato. The key switches from G major to E minor, the key of restlessness (Steblin), and even touches D Mixolydian. The chords exhibit secondary dominance and accidentals, and even the instrumentation alters every measure from strings to the flute, clarinet and piano, and back again. All these musical traits underlie dialogue that does not seem out of ordinary, and serve to foreshadow the end of the relationship.

The benefit of Act 1 to Act 2, if they are treated as separate books rather than successive chapters, is to provide background to the conflict between the couple; hence, Sondheim does not need to provide another personality explication like that seen in "Maybe They're Magic" or "Baker's Reprise". Chronologically, the next appearance is that of the Baker's Wife as she meets Cinderella's Prince, betrays her husband, and dies a sudden death. The reason behind this cause-effect relationship is questioned by many: one of the most credible theories involves an investigation of the Baker's Wife and her 'challenge to the deeper story of postmodernism itself' (Fulk). However, this theory in particular forgets that Stephen Sondheim could have easily written poetry about his ideals; the music, once again, reveals Sondheim's personal judgment of adultery.

The Baker's Wife's dance with the prince involves a repetitive song, "Any Moment", as characteristic to the Prince's musical style: steady, rolling eighth notes, constant I-IV chord progressions, dynamics all centered around mezzo-piano, and unchanging instrumentation. The Act 1 analysis of the Baker's Wife, in contrast, gives her many creative aspects in terms of style. But as the Prince leaves the Baker's Wife from the glade, the transition into "Moments in the Woods" is the last type of music we expect to hear from the Baker's Wife: repetitive orchestration and rhythm. The first twenty-one measures of the song are exact reverberations of the Prince; the next six measures are the Baker's Wife waking up from her dream, attempting to shake off the repetition by changing time, tempo, key, and instrumentation. She tends to sing in common time, but literally stutters between it and the Prince's beat in three; the bassoon of the Baker irritates her as it plays grace notes that emphasize the stutter effect; and she finally manages to settle into B flat major, ironically the key of a "clear conscience" (Steblin). As she transitions into 'her own style', however, it is evident that the Prince's motifs are embedded into the Baker's Wife's music. Hints of "It Takes Two" sneak in during smooth lines, and she even maintains her a cappella standards. But unfortunately, her fate is determined because, indeed, she cannot accept the Prince as a 'moment in the woods'. The rolling eighth notes underneath the "It Takes Two" motif, the caesuras, and the I-IV chord progression betray her music as the Prince echoes in her soul.

It would seem as if Sondheim would have been forgiving if the Baker's Wife had not mentally let the Prince become a part of her past. In lieu of the fact that we all make mistakes, her mistake is different and cannot be forgiven because she accepts it without regret. Because she loses her musical style due to her actions, she is no longer a complement to the Baker and his insecurity; unfit to be a wife or even sing a duet, Sondheim disposes of her. This is extremely

characteristic of Sondheim, described as one who “illuminat[ed] levels of discontent that exist within love and marriage relationships” (Sisler). Through the Baker’s Wife, he administers his own righteous judgment, justified through music.

After this, the Baker is consequently destined to never be fulfilled, as he was at the climax of Act 1. His first reaction is panic, as shown by his opening lines to “Your Fault”. This is a hectic song which uses keys, modes, cluster chords, and other tools to create utter harmonic chaos as it collides with the distress of other characters. It even opens in A flat major: the key of judgment (Steblin). This, however, is an extremely subjective song in terms of focus on the Baker; thus, more about his transformation after his wife’s death is revealed after he is given time to emerge from his panic. “No More” is the sad song of the Baker without his significant other, and a lament of a missing half. This explains why the song opens with his father, the Mysterious Man, as the Baker attempts to fill the gap in his musical style. He begins where his wife left off: the key of a clear conscience, B flat major. This sets the tone as a sort of pitiful sorrow, and appeals to the audience subliminally with emotion. Not only is the Baker righteous in his key, in contrast to his wife before her demise, but even after she is gone he uses the memories of her music to piece his own together—the key of B flat patterns not only “Moments in the Woods”, but additionally the opening chords of their happiest time—“It Takes Two”. The clarinet and bassoon even play in unison for his intro. Another pattern Sondheim uses to develop the tone is the use of almost exclusively major and minor seventh chords—the same chords used to begin the musical. Combined with the piano and synthesizer, these techniques make a rich, longing tone that looks back on much of the musical.

In “No More”, the music displays that the Baker finally lets go of his wife. He pieces together his introductory music with her techniques, and is at a loss to any further music until the

Mysterious Man assists his form one last time…"Like father, like son". The Baker's rhythm at measure 83 simplifies to half note unison; the full orchestra takes part in the harmony; and the chord progression eventually reverts to the Baker's I-IV that appears throughout all of his music. Without his wife, the Baker settles down to achieve ultimate simplicity. This is the core of the Baker's personality that could not be observed in the first act. By steady decline in musical complexity, Sondheim explicates the innate nature of the Baker as almost beneficially simplistic, relaxed, and rational. Fortunately for the Baker, "No One is Alone" (Sondheim).

Overall, the drastic changes and differences of the music of the Baker and his wife reveal their personalities, their faults, and the reasons they end up the way they do. Sondheim's orchestration in this case truly displays the power of love: the first act is a representation of love in its perfection, while the second act criticizes the relationships of the real world, judges the boundaries of forgiveness, and even suggests that one like the Baker can always find love in places other than marriage. To Sondheim, musical synthesis represents the existence of the soul mate; chord dissonance remembers conflict; permanent changes in style signify betrayal of oneself; and the absence of a musical framework reveals the true nature of the average person. Certainly, dialogue and plot cannot delve as deep into a composer's meaning.

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adult. There is no recognition of inner anxieties, nor of the dangers of temptation to our very existence. To quote Riesman, "there is none of the grimness of Little Red Riding Hood," which has been replaced by "a fake which the citizens put on for Tootle's benefit." Nowhere in *Tootle* is there an externalization onto story characters of inner processes and emotional problems pertaining to growing up, so that the child may be able to face the first and thus solve the latter.

We can fully believe it when at the end of *Tootle* we are told that Tootle has forgotten it ever did like flowers. Nobody with the widest stretch of imagination can believe that Little Red Riding Hood could ever forget her encounter with the wolf, or will stop liking flowers or the beauty of the world. Tootle's story, not creating any inner conviction in the hearer's mind, needs to rub in its lesson and predict the outcome: the engine will stay on the tracks and become a streamliner. No initiative, no freedom there.

The fairy tale carries within itself the conviction of its message; therefore it has no need to peg the hero to a specific way of life. There is no need to tell what Little Red Riding Hood will do, or what her future will be. Due to her experience, she will be well able to decide this herself. The wisdom about life, and about the dangers which her desires may bring about, is gained by every listener.

Little Red Riding Hood lost her childish innocence as she encountered the dangers residing in herself and the world, and exchanged it for wisdom that only the "twice born" can possess: those who not only master an existential crisis, but also become conscious that it was their own nature which projected them into it. Little Red Riding Hood's childish innocence dies as the wolf reveals itself as such and swallows her. When she is cut out of the wolf's belly, she is reborn on a higher plane of existence; relating positively to both her parents, no longer a child, she returns to life a young maiden.

"JACK AND THE BEANSTALK"

Fairy tales deal in literary form with the basic problems of life, particularly those inherent in the struggle to achieve maturity. They caution against the destructive consequences if one fails to develop higher levels of responsible selfhood, setting warning examples such as the older brothers in "The Three Feathers," the stepsisters in "Cin-

derella," the wolf in "Little Red Cap." To the child, these tales subtly suggest why he ought to strive for higher integration, and what is involved in it.

These same stories also intimate to a parent that he ought to be aware of the risks involved in his child's development, so that he may be alert to them and protect the child when necessary to prevent a catastrophe; and that he ought to support and encourage his child's personal and sexual development when and where this is appropriate.

The tales of the Jack cycle are of British origin; from there they became diffused throughout the English-speaking world.[60] By far the best-known and most interesting story of this cycle is "Jack and the Beanstalk." Important elements of this fairy tale appear in many stories all over the world: the seemingly stupid exchange which provides something of magic power; the miraculous seed from which a tree grows that reaches into heaven; the cannibalistic ogre that is outwitted and robbed; the hen that lays golden eggs or the golden goose; the musical instrument that talks. But their combination into a story which asserts the desirability of social and sexual self-assertion in the pubertal boy, and the foolishness of a mother who belittles this, is what makes "Jack and the Beanstalk" such a meaningful fairy tale.

One of the oldest stories of the Jack cycle is "Jack and His Bargains." In it the original conflict is not between a son and his mother who thinks him a fool, but a battle for dominance between son and father. This story presents some problems of the social-sexual development of the male in clearer form than "Jack and the Beanstalk," and the underlying message of the latter can be understood more readily in the light of this earlier tale.

In "Jack and His Bargains" we are told that Jack is a wild boy, of no help to his father. Worse, because of Jack the father has fallen on hard times and must meet all kinds of debts. So he has sent Jack with one of the family's seven cows to the fair, to sell it for as much money as he can get for it. On the way to the fair Jack meets a man who asks him where he is headed. Jack tells him, and the man offers to swap the cow for a wondrous stick: all its owner has to say is "Up stick and at it" and the stick will beat all enemies senseless. Jack makes the exchange. When he comes home, the father, who has expected to receive money for his cow, gets so furious that he fetches a stick to beat Jack with. In self-defense Jack calls on *his* stick, which beats the father until he cries for mercy. This establishes Jack's ascendancy over his father in the home, but does not provide the money they need. So Jack is sent to the next fair to sell another cow. He meets the same man and exchanges the cow for a bee that sings beautiful songs. The need

for money increases, and Jack is sent to sell a third cow. Once more he meets the man, and exchanges this cow for a fiddle which plays marvelous tunes.

Now the scene shifts. The king who rules in this part of the world has a daughter who is unable to smile. Her father promises to marry her to the man who can make her merry. Many princes and rich men try in vain to amuse her. Jack, in his ragged clothes, gets the better of all the highborn competitors, because the princess smiles when she hears the bee sing and the fiddle play so beautifully. She laughs outright as the stick beats up all the mighty suitors. So Jack is to marry her.

Before the marriage is to take place, the two are to spend a night in bed together. There Jack lies stock still and makes no move toward the princess. This greatly offends both her and her father; but the king soothes his daughter, and suggests that Jack may be scared of her and the new situation in which he finds himself. So on the following night another try is made, but the night passes as did the first. When on a third try Jack still does not move toward the princess in bed, the angry king has him thrown into a pit full of lions and tigers. Jack's stick beats these wild animals into submission, at which the princess marvels at "what a proper man he was." They get married "and had baskets full of children."

The story is somewhat incomplete. For example, while the number three is emphasized repeatedly—three encounters with the man, three exchanges of a cow for a magic object, three nights with the princess without Jack's "turning to her"—it remains unclear why seven cows are mentioned at the beginning and then we hear no more about the four cows remaining after three have been exchanged for the magic objects. Secondly, while there are many other fairy tales in which a man remains unresponsive to his love for three consecutive days or nights, usually this is explained in some fashion;* Jack's behavior in this regard, however, is left quite unexplained, and so we have to rely on our imagination for its meaning.

The magic formula "Up stick and at it" suggests phallic associations,

*For example, in the Brothers Grimm's tale "The Raven," a queen's daughter turned into a raven can be freed from her enchantment if the hero awaits her fully awake on the following afternoon. The raven warns him that to remain awake he must not eat or drink of anything an old woman will offer him. He promises, but on three consecutive days permits himself to be induced to take something and in consequence falls asleep at the appointed time when the raven-princess comes to meet him. Here it is an old woman's jealousy and a young man's selfish cupidity which explain his falling asleep when he should be wide awake for his beloved.

as does the fact that only this new acquisition permits Jack to hold his own in relation to his father, who up to now has dominated him. It is this stick which gains him victory in the competition with all suitors —a competition which is a sexual contest, since the prize is marrying the princess. It is the stick that finally leads to sexual possession of the princess, after it has beaten the wild animals into submission. While the lovely singing of the bee and the beautiful tunes of the fiddle make the princess smile, it is the stick's beating up the pretentious suitors, and thus making a shambles of what we may assume was their masculine posturing, that makes her laugh.* But if these sexual connotations were all there was to this story, it would not be a fairy tale, or not a very meaningful one. For its deeper significance we have to consider the other magic objects, and the nights during which Jack rests unmovingly beside the princess as if he himself were a stick.

Phallic potency, the story implies, is not enough. In itself it does not lead to better and higher things, nor does it make for sexual maturity. The bee—a symbol of hard work and sweetness, as it gives us honey, hence its delightful songs—stands for work and its enjoyment. Constructive labor as symbolized by the bee is a stark contrast to Jack's original wildness and laziness. After puberty, a boy must find constructive goals and work for them to become a useful member of society. That is why Jack is first provided with the stick, before he is given the bee and fiddle. The fiddle, the last present, symbolizes artistic achievement, and with it the highest human accomplishment. To win the princess, the power of the stick and what it symbolizes sexually is not sufficient. The power of the stick (sexual prowess) must become controlled, as suggested by the three nights in bed during which Jack does not move. By such behavior he demonstrates his self-control; with it he no longer rests his case on the display of phallic masculinity; he does not wish to win the princess by overpowering her. Through his subjugation of the wild animals Jack shows that he uses his strength to control those lower tendencies—the ferocity of

*There are many fairy tales in which an all-too-serious princess is won by the man who can make her laugh—that is, free her emotionally. This is frequently achieved by the hero's making persons who normally command respect look ridiculous. For example, in the Brothers Grimm's story "The Golden Goose," Simpleton, the youngest of three sons, because of his kindness to an old dwarf is given a goose with golden feathers. Cupidity induces various people to try to pull a feather off, but for this they get stuck to the goose, and to each other. Finally a parson and a sexton get stuck, too, and have to run after Simpleton and his goose. They look so ridiculous that on seeing this procession, the princess laughs.

lion and tiger, his wildness and irresponsibility which had piled up debts for his father—and with it becomes worthy of princess and kingdom. The princess recognizes this. Jack at first has made her only laugh, but at the end when he has demonstrated not only (sexual) power but also (sexual) self-control, he is recognized by her as a proper man with whom she can be happy and have many children.*

"Jack and His Bargains" begins with adolescent phallic self-assertion ("Up stick and at it") and ends with personal and social maturity as self-control and valuation of the higher things in life are achieved. The much-better-known "Jack and the Beanstalk" story starts and ends considerably earlier in a male's sexual development. While loss of infantile pleasure is barely hinted at in the first story with the need to sell the cows, this is a central issue in "Jack and the Beanstalk." We are told that the good cow Milky White, which until then had supported child and mother, has suddenly stopped giving milk. Thus the expulsion from an infantile paradise begins; it continues with the mother's deriding Jack's belief in the magic power of his seeds. The phallic beanstalk permits Jack to engage in oedipal conflict with the ogre, which he survives and finally wins, thanks only to the oedipal mother's taking his side against her own husband. Jack relinquishes his reliance on the belief in the magic power of phallic self-assertion as he cuts down the beanstalk; and this opens the way toward a development of mature masculinity. Thus, both versions of the Jack story together cover the entire male development.

Infancy ends when the belief in an unending supply of love and nutriment proves to be an irrealistic fantasy. Childhood begins with an equally irrealistic belief in what the child's own body in general, and specifically one aspect of it—his newly discovered sexual equipment—can achieve for him. As in infancy the mother's breast was symbol of all the child wanted of life and seemed to receive from her, so now his body, including his genitals, will do all that for the child, or so he wishes to believe. This is equally true for boys and girls; that is why "Jack and the Beanstalk" is enjoyed by children of both sexes.

*The Brothers Grimm's story "The Raven" may serve as a comparison to support the idea that three-times-repeated self-control over instinctual tendencies demonstrates sexual maturity, while its absence indicates an immaturity that prevents the gaining of one's true love. Unlike Jack, the hero in "The Raven," instead of controlling his desire for food and drink and for falling asleep, succumbs three times to the temptation by accepting the old woman's saying "One time is no time"—that is, it doesn't count—which shows his moral immaturity. He thus loses the princess. He finally gains her only after many errands through which he grows.

The end of childhood, as suggested before, is reached when such childish dreams of glory are given up and self-assertion, even against a parent, becomes the order of the day.

Every child can easily grasp the unconscious meaning of the tragedy when the good cow Milky White, who provided all that was needed, suddenly stops giving milk. It arouses dim memories of that tragic time when the flow of milk ceased for the child, when he was weaned. That is the time when the mother demands that the child must learn to make do with what the outside world can offer. This is symbolized by Jack's mother sending him out into the world to arrange for something (the money he is expected to get for the cow) that will provide sustenance. But Jack's belief in magic supplies has not prepared him for meeting the world realistically.

If up until now Mother (the cow, in fairy-tale metaphor) has supplied all that was needed and she now no longer does so, the child will naturally turn to his father—represented in the story by the man encountered on the way—expecting Father to supply magically to the child all he needs. Deprived of the "magic" supplies which up to then have been assured, and which he has felt were his unquestionable "rights," Jack is more than ready to exchange the cow for any promise of a magic solution to the impasse in living in which he finds himself.

It is not just Mother who tells Jack to sell the cow because it no longer gives milk; Jack also wants to get rid of this no-good cow that disappoints him. If Mother, in the form of Milky White, deprives and makes it imperative to change things, then Jack is going to exchange the cow not for what Mother wants, but for what seems more desirable to him.

To be sent out to encounter the world means the end of infancy. The child then has to begin the long and difficult process of turning himself into an adult. The first step on this road is relinquishing reliance on oral solutions to all of life's problems. Oral dependency has to be replaced by what the child can do for himself, on his own initiative. In "Jack and His Bargains" the hero is handed all three magic objects and only by means of them gains his independence; these objects do everything for him. His only contribution, while it shows self-control, is a rather passive one: he does nothing while in bed with the princess. When he is thrown into a pit with the wild animals, he is rescued not by his courage or intelligence, but only by the magic power of his stick.

Things are very different in "Jack and the Beanstalk." This story tells that while belief in magic can help in daring to meet the world

on our own, in the last analysis we must take the initiative and be willing to run the risks involved in mastering life. When Jack is given the magic seeds, he climbs the beanstalk on his own initiative, not because somebody else suggested it. Jack uses his body's strength skillfully in climbing the beanstalk, and risks his life three times to gain the magic objects. At the end of the story he cuts down the beanstalk and in this way makes secure his possession of the magic objects which he has gained through his own cunning.

Giving up oral dependency is acceptable only if the child can find security in a realistic—or, more likely, a fantastically exaggerated—belief in what his body and its organs will do for him. But a child sees in sexuality not something based on a relation between a man and a woman, but something that he can achieve all by himself. Disappointed in his mother, a little boy is not likely to accept the idea that to achieve his masculinity he requires a woman. Without such (unrealistic) belief in himself, the child is not able to meet the world. The story tells that Jack looked for work, but didn't succeed in finding it; he is not yet able to manage realistically; this the man who gives him the magic seeds understands, although his mother does not. Only trust in what his own body—or, more specifically, his budding sexuality—can achieve for him permits the child to give up reliance on oral satisfaction; this is another reason why Jack is ready to exchange cow for seeds.

If his mother would accept Jack's wish to believe that his seeds and what they eventually may grow into are as valuable now as cow milk was in the past, then Jack would have less need to take recourse to fantasy satisfactions, such as the belief in magic phallic powers as symbolized by the huge beanstalk. Instead of approving of Jack's first act of independence and initiative—exchanging the cow for seeds—his mother ridicules what he has done, is angry with him for it, beats him, and, worst of all, falls back on the exercise of her depriving oral power: as punishment for having shown initiative, Jack is sent to bed without being given any food.

There, while he is in bed, reality having proven so disappointing, fantasy satisfaction takes over. The psychological subtlety of fairy stories which gives what they tell the ring of truth is shown once more in the fact that it is during the night that the seeds grow into the huge beanstalk. No normal boy could during the day exaggerate so fantastically the hopes which his newly discovered masculinity evokes in him. But during the night, in his dreams, it appears to him in extravagant images, such as the beanstalk on which he will climb to the gates of

heaven. The story tells that when Jack awakes, his room is partly dark, the beanstalk shutting off the light. This is another hint that all that takes place—Jack's climbing into the sky on the beanstalk, his encounters with the ogre, etc.—is but dreams, dreams which give a boy hope for the great things he will one day accomplish.

The fantastic growth of the humble but magic seeds during the night is understood by children as a symbol of the miraculous power and of the satisfactions Jack's sexual development can bring about: the phallic phase is replacing the oral one; the beanstalk has replaced Milky White. On this beanstalk the child will climb into the sky to achieve a higher existence.

But, the story warns, this is not without its great dangers. Getting stuck in the phallic phase is little progress over fixation on the oral phase. Only when the relative independence acquired due to the new social and sexual development is used to solve the old oedipal problems will it lead to true human progress. Hence Jack's dangerous encounters with the ogre, as the oedipal father. But Jack also receives help from the ogre's wife, without which he would be destroyed by the ogre. How insecure Jack in "Jack and the Beanstalk" is about his newly discovered masculine strength is illustrated by his "regression" to orality whenever he feels threatened: he hides twice in the oven, and finally in a "copper," a large cooking vessel. His immaturity is further suggested by his stealing the magic objects which are the ogre's possessions, which he gets away with only because the ogre is asleep.* Jack's essential unreadiness to trust his newly found masculinity is indicated by his asking the ogre's wife for food because he is so hungry.

In fairy-tale fashion, this story depicts the stages of development a boy has to go through to become an independent human being, and shows how this is possible, even enjoyable, despite all dangers, and most advantageous. Giving up relying on oral satisfactions—or rather having been forced out of it by circumstances—and replacing them with phallic satisfaction as solution to all of life's problems are not enough: one has also to add, step by step, higher values to the ones already achieved. Before this can happen, one needs to work through the oedipal situation, which begins with deep disappointment in the mother and involves intense competition with and jealousy of the

*How different is the behavior of Jack in "Jack and His Bargains," who trusts his newly gained strength. He does not hide or get things on the sly; on the contrary, when in a dangerous situation, whether with his father, his competitors for the princess, or the wild beasts, he openly uses the power of his stick to gain his goals.

father. The boy does not yet trust Father enough to relate openly to him. To master the difficulties of this period, the boy needs a mother's understanding help: only because the ogre's wife protects and hides Jack can he acquire the ogre-father's powers.

On his first trip Jack steals a bag filled with gold. This gives him and his mother the resources to buy what they need, but eventually they run out of money. So Jack repeats his excursion, although he now knows that in doing so he risks his life.*

On his second trip Jack gains the hen that lays the golden eggs: he has learned that one runs out of things if one cannot produce them or have them produced. With the hen Jack could be content, since now all physical needs are permanently satisfied. So it is not necessity which motivates Jack's last trip, but the desire for daring and adventure—the wish to find something better than mere material goods. Thus, Jack next attains the golden harp, which symbolizes beauty, art, the higher things in life. This is followed by the last growth experience, in which Jack learns that it will not do to rely on magic for solving life's problems.

As Jack gains full humanity by striving for and gaining what the harp represents, he is also forcefully made aware—through the ogre's nearly catching him—that if he continues to rely on magic solutions, he will end up destroyed. As the ogre pursues him down the beanstalk, Jack calls out to his mother to get the ax and cut the beanstalk.

*On some level, climbing up the beanstalk symbolizes not only the "magic" power of the phallus to rise, but also a boy's feelings connected with masturbation. The child who masturbates fears that if he is found out, he will suffer terrible punishment, as symbolized by the ogre's doing away with him if he should discover what Jack is up to. But the child also feels as if he is, in masturbating, "stealing" some of his parent's powers. The child who, on an unconscious level, understands this meaning of the story derives reassurance that his masturbation anxieties are invalid. His "phallic" excursion into the world of the grown-up giant-ogres, far from leading to his destruction, gains him advantages he is able to enjoy permanently.

Here is another example of how the fairy tale permits the child to understand and be helped on an unconscious level without his having to become aware on a conscious level of what the story is dealing with. The fairy tale represents in images what goes on in the unconscious or preconscious of the child: how his awakening sexuality seems like a miracle that happens in the darkness of the night, or in his dream. Climbing up the beanstalk, and what it symbolizes, creates the anxiety that at the end of this experience he will be destroyed for his daring. The child fears that his desire to become sexually active amounts to stealing parental powers and prerogatives, and that therefore this can be done only on the sly, when the adults are unable to see what goes on. After the story has given body to these anxieties, it assures the child that the ending will be a good one.

The mother brings the ax as told, but on seeing the giant's huge legs coming down the beanstalk, she freezes into immobility; she is unable to deal with phallic objects. On a different level, the mother's freezing signifies that while a mother may protect her boy against the dangers involved in striving for manhood—as the ogre's wife did in hiding Jack—she cannot gain it for him; only he himself can do that. Jack grabs the ax and cuts off the beanstalk, and with it brings down the ogre, who perishes from his fall. In doing so, Jack rids himself of the father who is experienced on the oral level: as a jealous ogre who wants to devour.

But in cutting down the beanstalk Jack not only frees himself from a view of the father as a destructive and devouring ogre; he also thus relinquishes his belief in the magic power of the phallus as the means for gaining him all the good things in life. In putting the ax to the beanstalk, Jack forswears magic solutions; he becomes "his own man." He no longer will take from others, but neither will he live in mortal fear of ogres, nor rely on Mother's hiding him in an oven (regressing to orality).

As the story of "Jack and the Beanstalk" ends, Jack is ready to give up phallic and oedipal fantasies and instead try to live in reality, as much as a boy his age can do so. The next development may see him no longer trying to trick a sleeping father out of his possessions, nor fantasizing that a mother figure will for his sake betray her husband, but ready to strive openly for his social and sexual ascendency. This is where "Jack and His Bargains" begins, which sees its hero attain such maturity.

This fairy tale, like many others, could teach parents much as it helps children grow up. It tells mothers what little boys need to solve their oedipal problems: Mother must side with the boy's masculine daring, surreptitious though it may still be, and protect him against the dangers which might be inherent in masculine assertion, particularly when directed against the father.

The mother in "Jack and the Beanstalk" fails her son because, instead of supporting his developing masculinity, she denies its validity. The parent of the other sex ought to encourage a child's pubertal sexual development, particularly as he seeks goals and achievements in the wider world. Jack's mother, who thought her son utterly foolish for the trading he had done, stands revealed as the foolish one because she failed to recognize the development from child to adolescent which was taking place in her son. If she had had her way, Jack would have remained an immature child, and neither he nor his mother

would have escaped their misery. Jack, motivated by his budding manhood, undeterred by his mother's low opinion of him, gains great fortune through his courageous actions. This story teaches—as do many other fairy tales, such as "The Three Languages"—that the parents' error is basically the lack of an appropriate and sensitive response to the various problems involved in a child's maturing personally, socially, and sexually.

The oedipal conflict within the boy in this fairy tale is conveniently externalized onto two very distant figures who exist somewhere in a castle in the sky: the ogre and his wife. It is many a child's experience that most of the time, when Father—like the ogre in the tale—is out of the home, the child and his mother have a good time together, as do Jack and the ogre's wife. Then suddenly Father comes home, asking for his meal, which spoils everything for the child, who is not made welcome by his father. If a child is not given the feeling that his father is happy to find him home, he will be afraid of what he fantasized while Father was away, because it didn't include Father. Since the child wants to rob Father of his most prized possessions, how natural that he should fear being destroyed in retaliation.

Given all the dangers of regressing to orality, here is another implied message of the Jack story: it was not at all bad that Milky White stopped giving milk. Had this not happened, Jack would not have gotten the seeds out of which the beanstalk grew. Orality thus not only sustains—when hung on to too long, it prevents further development; it even destroys, as does the orally fixated ogre. Orality can be left safely behind for masculinity if Mother approves and continues to offer protection. The ogre's wife hides Jack in a safe, confined place, as Mother's womb had provided safety against all dangers. Such a short regression to a previous stage of development provides the security and strength needed for the next step in independence and self-assertion. It permits the little boy to enjoy fully the advantages of the phallic development he is now entering. And if the bag of gold and, even more, the hen that lays the golden eggs stand for anal ideas of possession, the story assures that the child will not get stuck in the anal stage of development: he will soon realize that he must sublimate such primitive views and become dissatisfied with them. He will then settle for nothing less than the golden harp and what it symbolizes.*

*Unfortunately, "Jack and the Beanstalk" is often reprinted in a form that contains many changes and additions, mostly the result of efforts to provide moral justification for Jack's robbing the giant. These changes, however, destroy the story's poetic impact and rob it of its deeper psychological meaning. In this bowdlerized version,

another, identify with a third, have ideal attachments with a fourth, and so on, as his needs of the moment require.

When all the child's wishful thinking gets embodied in a good fairy; all his destructive wishes in an evil witch; all his fears in a voracious wolf; all the demands of his conscience in a wise man encountered on an adventure; all his jealous anger in some animal that pecks out the eyes of his archrivals—then the child can finally begin to sort out his contradictory tendencies. Once this starts, the child will be less and less engulfed by unmanageable chaos.

TRANSFORMATIONS

THE FANTASY OF THE WICKED STEPMOTHER

There is a right time for certain growth experiences, and childhood is the time to learn bridging the immense gap between inner experiences and the real world. Fairy tales may seem senseless, fantastic, scary, and totally unbelievable to the adult who was deprived of fairy-story fantasy in his own childhood, or has repressed these memories. An adult who has not achieved a satisfactory integration of the two worlds of reality and imagination is put off by such tales. But an adult who in his own life is able to integrate rational order with the illogic of his unconscious will be responsive to the manner in which fairy tales help the child with this integration. To the child, and to the adult who, like Socrates, knows that there is still a child in the wisest of us, fairy tales reveal truths about mankind and oneself.

In "Little Red Riding Hood" the kindly grandmother undergoes a sudden replacement by the rapacious wolf which threatens to destroy the child. How silly a transformation when viewed objectively, and how frightening—we might think the transformation unnecessarily scary, contrary to all possible reality. But when viewed in terms of a child's ways of experiencing, is it really any more scary than the sudden transformation of his own kindly grandma into a figure who threatens his very sense of self when she humiliates him for a pants-wetting accident? To the child, Grandma is no longer the same person she was just a moment before; she has become an ogre. How can someone who was so very kind, who brought presents and was more

understanding and tolerant and uncritical than even his own mommy, suddenly act in such a radically different fashion?

Unable to see any congruence between the different manifestations, the child truly experiences Grandma as two separate entities—the loving and the threatening. She is indeed Grandma *and* the wolf. By dividing her up, so to speak, the child can preserve his image of the good grandmother. If she changes into a wolf—well, that's certainly scary, but he need not compromise his vision of Grandma's benevolence. And in any case, as the story tells him, the wolf is a passing manifestation—Grandma will return triumphant.

Similarly, although Mother is most often the all-giving protector, she can change into the cruel stepmother if she is so evil as to deny the youngster something he wants.

Far from being a device used only by fairy tales, such a splitting up of one person into two to keep the good image uncontaminated occurs to many children as a solution to a relationship too difficult to manage or comprehend. With this device all contradictions are suddenly solved, as they were for a college student who remembered an incident that occurred when she was not yet five years old.

One day in a supermarket this girl's mother suddenly became very angry with her; and the girl felt utterly devastated that her mother could act this way toward her. On the walk home, her mother continued to scold her angrily, telling her she was no good. The girl became convinced that this vicious person only *looked* like her mother and, although pretending to be her, was actually an evil Martian, a look-alike impostor, who had taken away her mother and assumed her appearance. From then on, the girl assumed on many different occasions that this Martian had abducted the mother and taken her place to torture the child as the real mother would never have done.

This fantasy went on for a couple of years until, when seven, the girl became courageous enough to try to set traps for the Martian. When the Martian had once again taken Mother's place to engage in its nefarious practice of torturing her, the girl would cleverly put some question to the Martian about what had happened between the real mother and herself. To her amazement, the Martian knew all about it, which at first just confirmed the Martian's cunning to the girl. But after two or three such experiments the girl became doubtful; then she asked her mother about events which had taken place between the girl and the Martian. When it became obvious that her mother knew about these events, the fantasy of the Martian collapsed.

During the period when the girl's security had required that

Mother should be all good—never angry or rejecting—the girl had rearranged reality to provide herself with what she needed. When the girl grew older and more secure, her mother's anger or severe criticisms no longer seemed so utterly devastating. Since her own integration had become better established, the girl could dispense with the security-guaranteeing Martian fantasy and rework the double picture of the mother into one by testing the reality of her fantasy.

While all young children sometimes need to split the image of their parent into its benevolent and threatening aspects to feel fully sheltered by the first, most cannot do it as cleverly and consciously as this girl did. Most children cannot find their own solution to the impasse of Mother suddenly changing into "a look-alike impostor." Fairy tales, which contain good fairies who suddenly appear and help the child find happiness despite this "impostor" or "stepmother," permit the child not to be destroyed by this "impostor." Fairy tales indicate that, somewhere hidden, the good fairy godmother watches over the child's fate, ready to assert her power when critically needed. The fairy tale tells the child that "although there are witches, don't ever forget there are also the good fairies, who are much more powerful." The same tales assure that the ferocious giant can always be outwitted by the clever little man—somebody seemingly as powerless as the child feels himself to be. Quite likely it was some story about a child who cleverly outwits an evil spirit which gave this girl the courage to try to expose the Martian.

The universality of such fantasies is suggested by what, in psychoanalysis, is known as the pubertal child's "family romance."[26] These are fantasies or daydreams which the normal youngster partly recognizes as such, but nonetheless also partly believes. They center on the idea that one's parents are not really one's parents, but that one is the child of some exalted personage, and that, due to unfortunate circumstances, one has been reduced to living with these people, who *claim* to be one's parents. These daydreams take various forms: often only one parent is thought to be a false one—which parallels a frequent situation in fairy tales, where one parent is the real one, the other a step-parent. The child's hopeful expectation is that one day, by chance or design, the real parent will appear and the child will be elevated into his rightful exalted state and live happily ever after.

These fantasies are helpful; they permit the child to feel really angry at the Martian pretender or the "false parent" without guilt. Such fantasies typically begin to appear when guilt feelings are already a part of the child's personality make-up, and when being angry

at a parent or, worse, despising him would bring with it unmanageable guilt. So the typical fairy-tale splitting of the mother into a good (usually dead) mother and an evil stepmother serves the child well. It is not only a means of preserving an internal all-good mother when the real mother is not all-good, but it also permits anger at this bad "stepmother" without endangering the goodwill of the true mother, who is viewed as a different person. Thus, the fairy tale suggests how the child may manage the contradictory feelings which would otherwise overwhelm him at this stage of his barely beginning ability to integrate contradictory emotions. The fantasy of the wicked stepmother not only preserves the good mother intact, it also prevents having to feel guilty about one's angry thoughts and wishes about her —a guilt which would seriously interfere with the good relation to Mother.

While the fantasy of the evil stepmother thus preserves the image of the good mother, the fairy tale also helps the child not to be devastated by experiencing his mother as evil. In much the same way that the Martian in the little girl's fantasy disappeared as soon as Mother was once again pleased with her little girl, so a benevolent spirit can counteract in a moment all the bad doings of an evil one. In the fairy-tale rescuer, the good qualities of Mother are as exaggerated as the bad ones were in the witch. But this is how the young child experiences the world: either as entirely blissful or as an unmitigated hell.

When he experiences the emotional need to do so, the child not only splits a parent into two figures, but he may also split himself into two people who, he wishes to believe, have nothing in common with each other. I have known young children who during the day are successfully dry but who wet their bed at night and, waking up, move with disgust to a corner and say with conviction, "Somebody's wet my bed." The child does not do this, as parents may think, to put the blame on somebody else, knowing all the while that it was he who urinated in the bed. The "somebody" who has done it is that part of himself with which he has by now parted company; this aspect of his personality has actually become a stranger to him. To insist that the child recognize that it *was* he who wet the bed is to try to impose prematurely the concept of the integrity of the human personality, and such insistence actually retards its development. In order to develop a secure feeling of his self, the child needs to constrict it for a time to only what is fully approved and desired by himself. After he has thus achieved a self of which he can be unambivalently proud, the

child can then slowly begin to accept the idea that it may also contain aspects of a more dubious nature.

As the parent in the fairy tale becomes separated into two figures, representative of the opposite feelings of loving and rejecting, so the child externalizes and projects onto a "somebody" all the bad things which are too scary to be recognized as part of oneself.

The fairy-tale literature does not fail to consider the problematic nature of sometimes seeing Mother as an evil stepmother; in its own way, the fairy tale warns against being swept away too far and too fast by angry feelings. A child easily gives in to his annoyance with a person dear to him, or to his impatience when kept waiting; he tends to harbor angry feelings, and to embark on furious wishes with little thought of the consequences should these come true. Many fairy tales depict the tragic outcome of such rash wishes, engaged in because one desires something too much or is unable to wait until things come about in their good time. Both mental states are typical for the child. Two stories of the Brothers Grimm may illustrate.

In "Hans, My Hedgehog" a man becomes angry when his great desire for having children is frustrated by his wife's inability to have any. Finally he gets carried away enough to exclaim, "I want a child, even if it should be a hedgehog." His wish is granted: his wife begets a child who is a hedgehog on top, while the lower part of his body is that of a boy.*

*The motif that parents who too impatiently desire to have children are punished by giving birth to strange mixtures of human and animal beings is an ancient one, and widely distributed. For example, it is the topic of a Turkish tale in which King Solomon effects the restitution of a child to full humanity. In these stories, if the parents treat the misdeveloped child well and with great patience, he is eventually restored as an attractive human being.

The psychological wisdom of these tales is remarkable: lack of control over emotions on the part of the parent creates a child who is a misfit. In fairy tales and dreams, physical malformation often stands for psychological misdevelopment. In these stories, the upper part of the body including the head is usually animal-like, while the lower part is of normal human form. This indicates that things are wrong with the head—that is, mind—of the child, and not his body. The stories also tell that the damage done to the child through negative feelings can be corrected, through the impact of positive emotions lavished on him, if the parents are sufficiently patient and consistent. The children of angry parents often behave like hedgehogs or porcupines: they seem all spines, so the image of the child that is part hedgehog is most appropriate.

These are also cautionary tales which warn: Do not conceive children in anger; do not receive them with anger and impatience on their arrival. But, like all good fairy

In "The Seven Ravens" a newborn child so preoccupies a father's emotions that he turns his anger against his older children. He sends one of his seven sons to fetch baptismal water for the christening of the infant daughter, an errand on which his six brothers join him. The father, in his anger at being kept waiting, shouts, "I wish all the boys would turn into ravens"—which promptly happens.

If these fairy stories in which angry wishes come true ended there, they would be merely cautionary tales, warning us not to permit ourselves to be carried away by our negative emotions—something the child is unable to avoid. But the fairy tale knows better than to expect the impossible of the child, and to make him anxious about having angry wishes which he cannot help having. While the fairy tale realistically warns that being carried away by anger or impatience leads to trouble, it reassures that the consequences are only temporary ones, and that good will or deeds can undo all the harm done by bad wishing. Hans the Hedgehog helps a king lost in the forest to return safely home. The king promises to give Hans as a reward the first thing he encounters on his return home, which happens to be his only daughter. Despite Hans's appearance, the princess keeps her father's promise and marries Hans the Hedgehog. After the marriage, in the marital bed, Hans at last takes on a fully human form, and eventually he inherits the kingdom.* In "The Seven Ravens" the sister, who was the innocent cause of her brothers being turned into ravens, travels to the end of the world and makes a great sacrifice to undo the spell put on them. The ravens all regain their human form, and happiness is restored.

These stories tell that, despite the bad consequences which evil wishes have, with good will and effort things can be righted again. There are other tales which go much further and tell the child not to fear having such wishes because, although there are momentary consequences, nothing changes permanently; after all the wishing is done, things are exactly as they were before the wishing began. Such stories exist in many variations all over the globe.

In the Western world "The Three Wishes" is probably the best-known wish story. In the simplest form of this motif, a man or a woman is granted some wishes, usually three, by a stranger or an

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tales, these stories also indicate the right remedies to undo the damage, and the prescription is in line with the best psychological insights of today.

*This ending is typical for stories belonging to the animal-groom cycle, and will be discussed in connection with these stories (pp. 282 ff.).

animal as reward for some good deed. A man is given this favor in "The Three Wishes," but he thinks little of it. On his return home his wife presents him with his daily soup for dinner. " 'Soup again, I wish I had pudding for a change,' says he, and promptly the pudding appears." The wife demands to know how this has happened, and he tells her about his adventure. Furious that he wasted one of his wishes on such a trifle, she exclaims, "I wish the pudding was on your head," a wish which is immediately fulfilled. " 'That's two wishes gone! I wish the pudding was off my head,' says the man. And so the three wishes were gone."[27]

Together, these tales warn the child of the possible undesirable consequences of rash wishing, and assure him at the same time that such wishing has little consequence, particularly if one is sincere in one's desire and efforts to undo the bad results. Maybe even more important is the fact that I cannot recall a single fairy tale in which a child's angry wishes have any consequence; only those of adults do. The implication is that adults are accountable for what they do in their anger or their silliness, but children are not. If children wish in a fairy tale, they desire only good things; and chance or a good spirit fulfills their desires, often beyond their fondest hopes.

It is as if the fairy tale, while admitting how human it is to get angry, expects only adults to have sufficient self-control not to let themselves get carried away, since their outlandishly angry wishes come true—but the tales stress the wonderful consequences for a child if he engages in *positive* wishing or thinking. Desolation does not induce the fairy-tale child to engage in vengeful wishing. The child wishes only for good things, even when he has ample reason to wish that bad things would happen to those who persecute him. Snow White harbors no angry wishes against the evil queen. Cinderella, who has good reason to wish that her stepsisters be punished for their misdeeds, instead wishes them to go to the grand ball.

Left alone for a few hours, a child can feel as cruelly abused as though he had suffered a lifetime of neglect and rejection. Then, suddenly, his existence turns into complete bliss as his mother appears in the doorway, smiling, maybe even bringing him some little present. What could be more magical than that? How could something so simple have the power to alter his life, unless there were magic involved?

Radical transformations in the nature of things are experienced by the child on all sides, although *we* do not share his perceptions. But consider the child's dealings with inanimate objects: some object—a shoelace or a toy—utterly frustrates the child, to the degree that he

feels himself a complete fool. Then in a moment, as if by magic, the object becomes obedient and does his bidding; from being the most dejected of humans, he becomes the happiest. Doesn't this prove the magic character of the object? Quite a few fairy tales relate how finding a magic object changes the hero's life; with its help, the fool turns out smarter than his previously preferred siblings. The child who feels himself doomed to be an ugly duckling need not despair; he will grow into a beautiful swan.

A small child can do little on his own, and this is disappointing to him—so much so that he may give up in despair. The fairy story prevents this by giving extraordinary dignity to the smallest achievement, and suggesting that the most wonderful consequences may grow out of it. Finding a jar or bottle (as in the Brothers Grimm's story "The Spirit in the Bottle"), befriending an animal or being befriended by it ("Puss-in-Boots"), sharing a piece of bread with a stranger ("The Golden Goose," another of the Brothers Grimm's stories)—such little everyday events lead to great things. So the fairy tale encourages the child to trust that his small real achievements are important, though he may not realize it at the moment.

The belief in such possibilities needs to be nurtured so that the child can accept his disillusionments without being utterly defeated; and beyond this, it can become a challenge to think with confidence about an existence beyond the parental home. The fairy tale's example provides assurance that the child will receive help in his endeavors in the outside world, and that eventual success will reward his sustained efforts. At the same time, the fairy tale stresses that these events happened once upon a time, in a far-distant land, and makes clear that it offers food for hope, not realistic accounts of what the world is like here and now.

The child intuitively comprehends that although these stories are *unreal,* they are not *untrue;* that while what these stories tell about does not happen in fact, it must happen as inner experience and personal development; that fairy tales depict in imaginary and symbolic form the essential steps in growing up and achieving an independent existence.

While fairy tales invariably point the way to a better future, they concentrate on the process of change, rather than describing the exact details of the bliss eventually to be gained. The stories start where the child is at the time, and suggest where he has to go—with emphasis on the process itself. Fairy tales can even show the child the way through that thorniest of thickets, the oedipal period.

10

SONDHEIM ISN'T GRIM
Into the Woods

Sondheim's prolific output continues unabated. While the wellspring of creative talent on Broadway seems to have run dry, Sondheim continues to develop the form of the musical theater. Although there are a number of smaller shows evolving in regional theater, Sondheim is the only American composer or lyricist to both consistently have his shows produced and never cease in his exploration of the endless possibilities of the genre. His latest collaboration with James Lapine confirms his apparently limitless creativity.

As a very young man Sondheim attempted, unsuccessfully, to musicalize *Mary Poppins*. Almost forty years later he and Lapine discovered fertile ground for their imaginations by creating an original tale of their own in which the characters' quests propel them into the more familiar world of such classic fairy tales as Cinderella, Jack and the Beanstalk, Rapunzel, and Little Red Ridinghood. Influenced by the theories of Carl Jung and by the insights of Bruno Bettelheim, whose work on the significance of fairy tales, *The Uses of Enchantment*, explores the darker Freudian ramifications of these stories, Sondheim and Lapine evolved a musical that manages to be delightful, melodic, and entertaining as well as intellectually astute and psychologically complex.

The themes that unite these disparate stories concern the difficulties of achieving maturity, the complex relationship between parent and child, and ultimately the necessity of recognizing human interdependence. Like a contemporary brothers Grimm, Sondheim and Lapine weave a magical fab-

ric of witches, giants, and spells but never allow the audience to forget the serious thematic underpinnings of the work.

Into the Woods enjoyed a gradual evolutionary birth. Beginning as a reading at Playwrights Horizons, the work went through three workshop readings in New York, and a tryout in San Diego, before opening on Broadway to generally favorable reviews and garnering for Sondheim yet another Tony Award for best music and lyrics. As with all of Sondheim's work, neither critics nor public were unanimous in their response, but judging from the general tenor of the reviews and the enthusiastic approbation at the Tony Awards ceremony, Sondheim has finally gained the respect of all. He is universally acknowledged to be the foremost American exponent of his chosen art form and is accorded a kind of awe not generally associated with either the musical or with other living artists. Some critics may not like his work, but all recognize his innovative genius. This respect is clearly evident in an article in *Time* magazine dedicated to America's best: "Sondheim has steadily pushed toward—or beyond—the limits of what the score, the narrative, the very premise of a musical can be. More than anyone else writing today, perhaps more than anyone who came before, he merges a consummate mastery of what musicals have been with a vision of what they should become."[1] While lacking the daring innovation and heartrending emotional revelation of *Sunday in the Park with George*, *Into the Woods* has a charm of its own.

Into the Woods opens with Cinderella, Jack and his Mother, and the original characters the Baker and his Wife in front of their fairy tale abodes bewailing their fate. With typical Sondheim style and finesse the characters' distinct desires are blended into a complex contrapuntal composition. The central motif is established in the opening words as Cinderella sings out plaintively, "I wish." This refrain is echoed by each of the characters and as the action progresses the consequences of these apparently innocent wishes are explored. These desires and the obstacles that will need to be overcome serve as the structure for the primary action of act 1.

The naïve wishes of the youthful protagonists—contrasted with the weary cynicism of Jack's Mother—are further enhanced as a young Little Red Ridinghood adds her demands. This character, perhaps the most humorous in a Sondheim musical since the zany excesses of *A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum*, has a voracious appetite, which will lead to her problematic encounter with the Wolf. Their adventure exemplifies the best

combination of sagacity and wit in the show. Little Red Ridinghood's singing of the refrain of the title song sets the tone of the entire musical. She is carefree. The jaunty rhythm and simple melody reflect her optimism. The lyrics appear almost naïve, but they possess the simplicity of fairytales and a cautionary note is repeatedly sounded:

> Into the woods,
> It's time to go.
> I hate to leave,
> I have to, though.
> Into the woods—
> It's time, and so
> I must begin my journey. . . .
>
> Into the woods
> To bring some bread
> To Granny who
> Is sick in bed.
> Never can tell
> What lies ahead,
> For all that I know,
> She's already dead.[2]

It is this combination of delightful humor and suggestive bleakness that permeates all the songs in the score.

Each of the major characters needs to enter the dark entangled wood of their inner desires and journey through an elemental rite of passage: Little Red Ridinghood, who skips blithely into the woods, blissfully stuffing buns into her mouth, must learn the thrills and terrors of indulgence. Sondheim and Lapine combine an innocence and innuendo in each encounter between the Wolf and his plump young prey that is both extremely funny and unexpectedly poignant. There is a wonderfully lascivious song for the leering Wolf as he entreats the succulent young girl:

> Hello, little girl.
> What's your rush?
> You're missing all the flowers.
> The sun won't set for hours,
> Take your time.

Here the comedy is perfectly tailored to character and action.

This synthesis of humor and insight is taken one step further when Little

Red Ridinghood sings after she has been freed from the dark confines of the Wolf's belly. The conflict between parental advice and temptation is captured in her opening lines:

> Mother said,
> "Straight ahead,"
> Not to delay
> Or be misled.
> I should have heeded
> Her advice ...
> But he seemed so nice.

The loss of innocence is suggested but Sondheim is not didactic:

> And take extra care with strangers.
> Even flowers have their dangers.
> And though scary is exciting,
> Nice is different than good.

His characters learn, but even with experience do not lose their ambivalence: "Isn't it nice to know a lot! / And a little bit not . . ."

Jack must be taught a similar lesson. Perhaps because he is intended to be a simple lad, he lacks Little Red Ridinghood's energetic appeal and obvious comic potential. Yet in this character, too, Sondheim synthesizes humor and pain. He composes a melancholy, melodic song of farewell for Jack to croon sadly to his beloved cow but undercuts the sentimentality with the black humor of the concluding lines:

> I'll see you soon again.
> I hope that when I do,
> It won't be on a plate.

Jack, like Little Red Ridinghood, has an experience both stimulating and terrifying, and he too has to compromise his moral code to achieve his goals. The significance of his adventure is also revealed in song; his attitude is equally ambivalent:

> When you're way up high
> And you look below
> At the world you've left
> And the things you know,
> Little more than a glance

Is enough to show
You just how small you are.

Cinderella's journey is also fraught with danger and fulfillment. Her tale of family rejection and ultimate success is humanized in Sondheim's lyrics as she describes her experience at the ball to the enraptured Baker's Wife.

Cinderella

He's a very nice Prince.

Baker's Wife

And—?

Cinderella

And—
It's a very nice Ball.

Baker's Wife

And—?

Cinderella

And—
When I entered, they trumpeted.

Baker's Wife

And—?
The Prince—?

Cinderella

Oh, the Prince ...

Baker's Wife

Yes, the Prince!

Cinderella

Well, he's tall.

The Baker and his wife have a simple wish. They want a child. They have been cursed with infertility, however, by the vengeful "witch next door." In order to break her spell they must seek out:

> One: the cow as white as milk,
> Two: the cape as red as blood,
> Three: the hair as yellow as corn,
> Four: the slipper as pure as gold.

These items, clearly, can only be found in the lives of the other more well-known characters.

In their struggle to wrest these articles from their rightful owners, the Baker and his wife must confront certain painful choices. Initially the Baker discovers that he must shed his false male independence and recognize his need for love, understanding, and cooperation. Sondheim conveys his character's struggle to accept this in a tender duet:

> *Baker*
>
> It takes two.
> I thought one was enough.
> It's not true:
> It takes two of us.
> You came through
> When the journey was rough.
> It took you.
> It took two of us.

In the couple's overwhelming desire to obtain their wish they lie and cheat, the consequences of which they must ultimately confront.

Sondheim intentionally modifies the intellectual complexity and sophistication of his previous work in the score of *Into the Woods*. Both lyrics and music express the stylistic purity of the fairy tale libretto and much of the score has a lively nursery rhyme quality. As Sondheim reveals:

> What I'm trying to do with the score is to sprinkle it with ditties; I'm trying to do little sixteen-, thirty-two-, and eight-bar tunes, almost cartoonish except in a sort of contemporary style. Morals, and travelling songs. And these little tunes start to go strange in the second act. You see, the first act is fast and funny and light and the second act is less goofy and a bit darker, so I would like the score to reflect that.[3]

But Sondheim's simplicity is never trite, as musical director Paul Gemignani points out:

> There is a kind of Disney thought-pattern to much of the show and I mean that in the best sense. For instance, when someone dies, you hear a little sad music. The witch has specific chords. The underscoring points out certain things. The subject matter lends itself to all of this. But it's deceptively simple. There are all kinds of colors in the score, and a complex rhythmic intensity. It's written as a chamber music piece, and the challenge is to make the sound crystalline.[4]

Sondheim originally intended identifying each of the major characters with an individual style and musical motif. Although this proved to be too schematic a limitation, many of the characters are in fact defined by their stylistic motifs. Cinderella sings her romance in a light operatic soprano, while Jack and his mother express themselves in simple folk tunes and childlike rhymes. The Wolf's lechery is translated into a soft-shoe shuffle while the Witch uses a unique rap style. This use of recurring motifs is similar to the technique used in *Merrily We Roll Along*, in which motifs are used, repeated, and transformed throughout the piece. As Sondheim explains: "The structure of the score is in a sense like *Merrily* in that it's modular again. . . . The whole prologue is a series of sixteen vignettes, each of which has a musical structure. And then there's one tune that keeps popping up, which becomes the major theme of the evening."[5]

Not all the score and lyrics depend on the spare emblematic charm of a child's tale. The music is richly melodic and Sondheim substitutes a warmth for his usual erudition. The emotional turmoil of the characters, particularly of the Baker and his wife, is perfectly conveyed in the melodic and harmonic development of the score. These two characters simultaneously inhabit the worlds of humanity and fairy tale. In their essentially middle-class aspirations and failures they most clearly exemplify the desires and limitations of the audience. Sondheim cements this fusion of audience and character by having these two express themselves in the language and rhythms of a typical urban couple. It is their moral and emotional journey that the audience must share.

The interrelationships of the characters are marvelously convoluted. The Witch, whose spell has caused the Baker's Wife's infertility, reveals that her garden was raped by the Baker's father and that she has consequently claimed his sister, Rapunzel, whom she keeps locked in a tower. Rapunzel in turn is loved by Cinderella's Prince's brother. As the various characters stumble through the woods seeking to fulfill their wishes, they encounter each other, interact, and then send the plot off in another direction. There

are no revolving bedroom doors, but in its intricate design the plot more closely resembles French farce than the clear linear didacticism of the traditional fairy tale.

Yet the darker underside of these children's stories is the real subject of *Into the Woods*. This does not mean that the musical is overtly symbolic or that its psychological substructure intrudes. Rather, its central themes of the pain of growing up and the difficulty of parent/child relationships are carried almost subliminally in the music and lyrics, while Lapine's labyrinth of a plot keeps characters and audience constantly tumbling forward into the tangled briars. Sondheim suggests the inner struggles and personal growth of the characters with a delicate hand. His songs lightly express their essential pain and then release the characters to the forward demands of the action. (Sondheim acknowledges that in many ways he found this score the most difficult to compose since writing *Forum*, because with highly plotted shows the songs are respites from the frantic action that, nevertheless, must not slow the pace.)

The titular theme song binds the various plots and musical motifs together, as the characters march innocently into the original world of their unconscious. They begin act 1 blithely asserting "The woods are just trees. / The trees are just wood" but have to learn the inevitable consequences of pursuing their desires and compromising their integrity. This metaphysical journey is a familiar one for Sondheim characters, as Frank Rich points out in his review:

> Like the middle-aged showbiz cynics who return to their haunted youth in *Follies* and *Merrily We Roll Along* or the contemporary descendant who revisits Georges Seurat in *Sunday in the Park with George* or the lovers who court in a nocturnal Scandinavian birch forest in *A Little Night Music*, Cinderella and company travel into a dark, enchanted wilderness to discover who they are and how they might grow up and overcome the eternal, terrifying plight of being alone.[9]

But the conclusions drawn from the lesson of this journey differ markedly from the impact of Sondheim's earlier work. The cynicism, isolation, and alienation implicit in other works is tempered with an unfamiliar plea for commitment and communal awareness. The naiveté of youth is transformed into a sober acceptance of reality. Neither Sondheim nor Lapine finds this painful process of maturation daunting. As Sondheim discloses:

> I think the final step in maturity is feeling responsible for everybody. If I could have written "no man is an island," I would have. But that's what "No One is Alone" is about. What I like about the title is it says two things. It says: no one is lonely, you're not alone—I'm on your side and I love you. And the other thing is: no one is alone—you have to be careful what you do to other people. You can't just go stealing gold and selling cows for more than they are worth, because it affects everybody else.[7]

And in describing the difference between the characters in acts 1 and 2, Lapine adds, "When you are young, you envision happiness in such an idealized way. As you get older you realize happiness involves a lot of problems. To me, that's not an unhappy kind of ending—it's just a more informed sense of happy, a happiness that's been earned."[8] The characters in *Into the Woods* do not mourn their loss of innocence but embrace it as a necessary ingredient to growing up. Their simplistic, unambiguous desires are relinquished as they understand the complexities of adult responsibility.

The impetus for character growth is implicit in the concluding moments of act 1. Each of the characters has apparently achieved his or her goal, but each has had to compromise integrity to do so. Consequently, although they all jubilantly sing "Happy now and happy hence/ And happy ever after," there is a sense of unease. This happy-ever-after has none of the tranquillity of perfection achieved in the final moments of act 1 of *Sunday in the Park with George*. This sense of disquiet is suggested in the very superficiality of the rollicking optimism of the song. Through their excessive zeal, Sondheim hints at the ephemeral quality of the characters' joy:

> Into the woods to lift the spell,
> Into the woods to lose the longing,
> Into the woods to have the child,
> To wed the Prince,
> To get the money,
> To save the house,
> To kill the Wolf,
> To find the father,
> To conquer the kingdom,
> To have, to wed,
> To get, to save,
> To kill, to keep,
> To go to the Festival!
>
> Into the woods,
> Into the woods.

Into the woods.
Then out of the woods
And happy ever after!

This ability to clothe a serious theme in a lively rhythm and convey significance in a comic mode is one of Sondheim's achievements. Despite its serious and emotional numbers, *Into the Woods* contains some of the funniest of Sondheim's material. "Agony," for example, is a lament by the two princely brothers about the frustrations of unrequieted passion:

Both

Agony!

Cinderella's Prince

Misery!

Rapunzel's Prince

Woe!

Both

Though it's different for each.

Cinderella's Prince

Always ten steps behind—

Rapunzel's Prince

Always ten feet below—

Both

And she's just out of reach.
Agony
That can cut like a knife!
I must have her to wife.

Like "Lovely" in *Forum*, this song is given greater comic resonance when in act 2 it is reprised. The princes have now grown bored with their wives and long for new, unattainable maidens:

Cinderella's Prince

High in a tower—
Like yours was, but higher—
A beauty asleep,
All 'round the tower

A thicket of briar
A hundred feet deep ...

Rapunzel's Prince

I found a casket
Entirely of glass—
(As Cinderella's Prince starts to shrug)
No, it's unbreakable.
Inside—don't ask it—
A maiden, alas,
Just as unwakeable ...

Act 2 journeys into apparently recognizable Sondheim territory. All the characters are ready to discover what follows "happily ever after." Rather than concentrate on the characters' individual problems—although it is clear that Cinderella's marriage is far from perfect, that wealth has not solved Jack's problem, that a screaming infant does not bring endless joy, and that the Witch having regained her former beauty has lost both her daughter and her power—Sondheim and Lapine chose instead to sublimate the individual problems by confronting the characters with a new danger. The wife of the giant killed by Jack returns to seek revenge. This communal threat, which has been interpreted by various critics to represent forces of evil as diverse as nuclear proliferation, AIDS, and the deranged individualism of Reaganomics, is a handy device that serves to reunite the characters. In the face of almost certain annihilation they learn to accept that only through cooperation can they hope to survive. The intricacies of this new plot development are less interesting, however, than the brief insights into the personal conflicts provided in the score. Two of the finest examples of this contemporary yet timeless angst occur in the evolving relationship of the Baker and his wife.

While wandering in the woods in search of the giant, the Baker's Wife encounters Cinderella's Prince. After their brief liaison the conflicts of fantasy and reality, romantic escapism and practicality are dramatized.

Baker's Wife

What was that?

Was that me?
Was that him?

Did a prince really kiss me?
And kiss me?
And kiss me?
And did I kiss him back? . . .

Back to life, back to sense,
Back to child, back to husband,
You can't live in the woods.
There are vows, there are ties,
There are needs, there are standards,
There are shouldn'ts and shoulds.

Why not both instead?
There's the answer, if you're clever:
Have a child for warmth,
And a baker for bread,
And a prince for whatever—
Never!
It's these woods.

The Baker's Wife longs to combine the wondrous ardor of the Prince with the domesticity of a husband and child. During the course of the song she grows to accept that life demands an either/or. She decides romance is ephemeral and feels compelled to return to the world of reality. She dies, however, before she can rejoin her husband. Despite certain accusations to the contrary, I do not think that this death is intended to be in retribution for her adultery.

It is the Baker who must finally confront reality and the truths of being alone. His desire to escape responsibility is expressed in one of the most impassioned sequences of the show. Sondheim's ability to translate anguish into music and expose all the ambiguity of emotional conflict is exemplified in the Baker's cry:

No more riddles,
No more jests,
No more curses you can't undo,
Left by fathers you never knew,
No more quests.

Although he is dealing with perennial human problems, Sondheim does not lose the archaic world of fairy tale in the language of his lyrics. This ability to go to the center of contemporary urban grief and yet never let go of the particular created milieu is quintessentially Sondheim.

Sondheim and Lapine experimented extensively and made a number of

alterations in the plot after the tryout in San Diego; they eventually decided, however, to keep the structure of the piece virtually unchanged. The most extensive revisions and additions to the score involved the role of the Witch. This part was played by a number of different actresses during the musical's evolution, but it was Bernadette Peters who finally opened on Broadway. Whether it was the choice of this actress or the intrinsic demands of the musical that prompted modifications, Sondheim decided to write new and significant material for this character, whose transformations are charted in song. As an ugly old crone she describes her ravishment in a bitter but humorous rap song:

> He was robbing me.
> Raping me.
> Rooting through my rutabaga.
> Raiding my arugula and
> Ripping up the rampion
> (My champion! My favorite!)—

The justification of her expressive dedication to her daughter, Rapunzel, is set to a tender lament:

> Why could you not obey?
> Children should listen.
> What have I been to you?
> What would you have me be?
> Handsome like a prince?
>
> Ah, but I am old.
> I am ugly.
> I embarrass you. . . .
>
> You are ashamed.
> You don't understand.

Finally she is transformed into a beautiful but powerless woman who mourns the loss of her child and the uncontrolled violence that now pervades her world:

> This is the world I meant.
> Couldn't you listen?
> Couldn't you stay content,
> Safe behind walls,
> As I
> Could not?

In a poignant threnody the Witch describes a world destroyed and points out the havoc wrought by selfishness:

> It's the last midnight,
> It's the boom—
> Splat!
> Nothing but a vast midnight,
> Everybody smashed flat!

Her frantic attempts to shield her child by walling her up in a tower are clearly symbolic and she must learn:

> No matter what you say,
> Children won't listen.
> No matter what you know,
> Children refuse
> To learn.
>
> Guide them along the way,
> Still they won't listen.
> Children can only grow
> From something you love
> To something you lose ...

This message is eventually modified in the final moments of the musical. Having clashed in a passionate orgy of accusation ("Your Fault"), the characters finally band together and conquer the giant. A quieter, more mature but tentatively optimistic group sings:

> Careful the wish you make,
> Wishes are children.
> Careful the path they take—
> Wishes come true,
> Not free. . . .
>
> Witch
>
> Careful the tale you tell,
> That is the spell.
> Children will listen ...

This mood of tranquillity may surprise audiences accustomed to Sondheim's dryer, more acerbic tone. But Sondheim's work can never be confined to rigid categorizations. With each new musical he not only reshapes the genre but redefines his own talent. Perhaps the glow of mature well-being that emanates from the stage in the final moments of *Into the Woods* may entice a larger share of the Broadway audience into the theater. But Sondheim's achievement must not be measured in box-office receipts.

Undeniably the public is gradually learning to appreciate Sondheim's genius. Perhaps one of the greatest ironies of Broadway history is that while British imports dominated the New York stage, the revised version of *Follies* played to sold-out houses in London. It took sixteen years for this masterpiece to find a producer, but finally the theatergoing public is beginning to catch up with Sondheim. Despite the decision to soften the cynicism and add a more upbeat conclusion, the message of *Follies* remains unchanged. It is the key to understanding all of Sondheim's work. This farewell to the naïveté and simplistic innocence of the past is Sondheim's tribute to all that came before him. There is nostalgia but no contempt. In its iconoclastic brilliance, *Follies* is also a clear monument to Sondheim's own creativity. Sondheim knows that the old forms must die to reveal the new art form that can evolve.

Although *Into the Woods* is gentler than his earlier musicals, this does not mean that Sondheim has deviated from his path of innovative individuality. The majority of his musicals do not express the unambiguous cheer and superficial gloss of the traditional musical, but Sondheim has discovered a more profound emotional and aesthetic truth. His audiences may be disturbed, but the dramatic catharsis engendered by his work is far more valuable than the soothing platitudes of escapist entertainment. Sondheim is not easy, but art is not easy. His talent is defined by the challenges he sets himself and his audiences. Like his protagonist in *Sunday in the Park with George*, Sondheim is impelled to keep "moving on." His work is a never-ending source of theatrical exhilaration and intellectual challenge, and the prospect of his ongoing creative output guarantees the continuing growth in stature of the American musical.

In discussing one of his lyrics from *Gypsy*, Sondheim says:

> In "Everything's Coming Up Roses" there was very little to say in the lyric after the title was over, so I decided I would give it its feeling by restricting myself to images of traveling, children, and show business, because the scene was in a railroad station and was about a mother pushing her child into show business. Now that may be of no interest except to somebody doing a doctorate in 200 years on the use of traveling images in *Gypsy*. But the point is it's there, and it informs the whole song.*

It may be a source of some gratification to Sondheim that it did not take two hundred years for serious lovers of the musical theater to appreciate his invaluable contribution to the evolution of the genre.

No question, the songs in the brief and virtually plotless second act are startlingly different from those in the first and are tremendously satisfying. Their melodies are strong with consonant tone combinations that evolve through gratifying harmonies into full resolutions. Michael Starobin's orchestrations fulfill Sondheim's elegant arrangements while dispensing with the first act's severity. At the end of the second act there is no harshness, no glassy sound. This instrumentation is acoustic, the feeling is soft and honest; the strings and brass, even in the small orchestra, make a voluptuous sound.

The show had played a four-week engagement in the tiny (135-seat) Playwrights Horizons theater before being transferred to Broadway and the Booth Theatre for a May 2, 1984 opening. There, Lapine was heartsick about people walking out "in droves" at every preview. Since his background was with more experimental theater, *Sunday in the Park with George* did not seem particularly unorthodox to him, but, he said, "I guess for Broadway it was." His distress amused Sondheim. "I mean, he had never seen anyone walk out of a show! You don't walk out of Joe Papp's theater. You stay there whether it's shit or not. I said, 'James, you ought to come and see more of my shows. This is called 'what they do.' "

Then the *New York Times* critic, Frank Rich, liked it so much that for a time he seemed to be the show's press agent. *Sunday in the Park with George* eventually ran for 604 performances and won the Pulitzer Prize for drama. It didn't make any money, but Sondheim and Lapine had blended the professionalism of the commercial theater with the adventurousness of the avant-garde to make a different kind of musical. That was important.

Sondheim's work has such reach, there is so much emotional resonance, that many observers take it personally and become as fascinated with the artist as with the art; they see him in his work. In the case of *Sunday in the Park with George*, comparisons were made between Sondheim and Seurat, the unrecognized, disengaged loner who, like Robert in *Company*, could not make an emotional connection. James Lapine was bemused by the comparisons. "Steve," he said, "is very much Mr. Social Responsibility, head of the Dramatists Guild and all that. And very social. It seemed to me he was a tremendous success. Seurat was never a success in his time."

Still, the resemblance was striking.

INTO THE WOODS

After a musical that Sondheim himself considered "weird," he couldn't be blamed for wanting to write something that was "fun and entertaining." He wanted to do it with Lapine because he had enjoyed the collaboration; it had stretched him as an artist and as a man. He seemed to be playing a more forceful role in the overall creation than he had with Prince, and the partnership with a poet had evoked a poetic strain in his own work. That would frustrate those who doted on his Broadway stuff. Some would call him a chameleon whose work changed with his collaborators, but that was based on the notion that an artist should have a marked style. Sondheim certainly had a musical identity, and whatever the approach, his voice could be detected; moreover he was perfectly capable of writing catchy music when the subject called for it (as would the movie *Dick Tracy*). More important had been his decision, ever since *Company*, to create a special kind of music to suit each show. That was his rarest and most important musical talent; it was, in fact, unique.

As nothing he had done with Harold Prince had been traditional, so it still was. To be "fun and entertaining" might have been the new show's purpose, but *Into the Woods* would hardly be a musical comedy. It would bring together assorted characters from fairy tales: Cinderella, Little Red Ridinghood, Rapunzel, Jack (of beanstalk renown), and others. Connective tissue would be provided by Lapine's own original fairy tale, the story of a Baker and his Wife who are childless because of a witch's curse. They would be the central characters, and yet

because they are not mythical like the others, they would seem like outsiders in this fairyland. They would be the audience's surrogates.

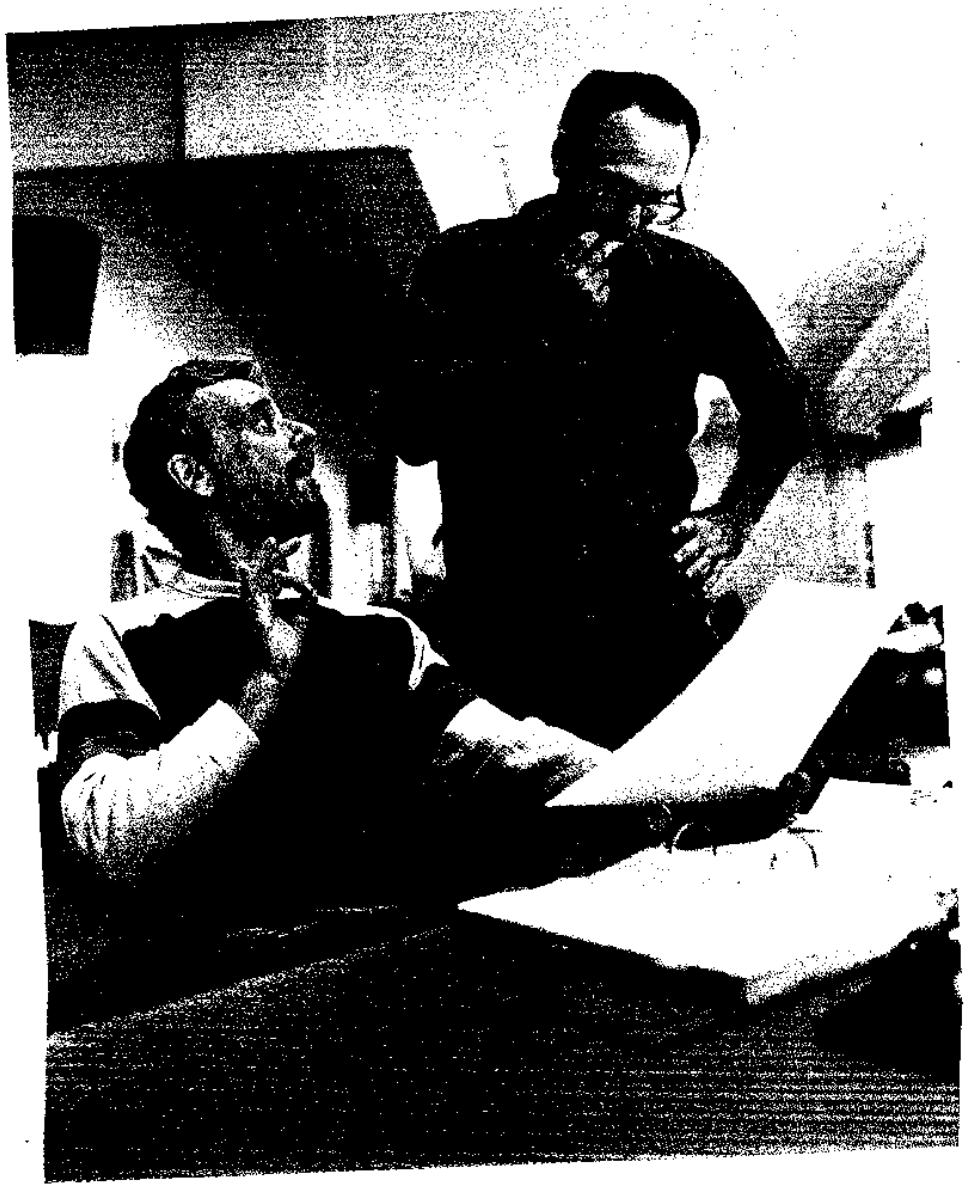
Even a fairy-tale musical by Stephen Sondheim was bound to have its share of twentieth-century angst. The show would involve nervousness and frustration, ambivalence and anxiety. Since Lapine shared Sondheim's interest in psychology, the introspection factor was going to be high.

The show's central notion is that most fairy tales are about a wish and a search to fulfill it. Thus the theme:

> Into the woods
> To get the thing
> That makes it worth
> The journeying.

and,

> Then out of the woods,
> And home before dark!



Sondheim and James Lapine discuss an idea for Into the Woods.

Rejecting the simple fairy tales found in children's books and Walt Disney movies, Sondheim and Lapine went back to the sources. They also considered the interpretations of psychologist Bruno Bettelheim, whose book *The Uses of Enchantment* deals with symbolism in these children's stories.

Lapine took what he called "an anti-Bettelheim approach." Inclined toward the theories of Carl Jung, he felt that fairy tales too often offer false hope, the promise of a happy ending or better (worse), a happily *ever after*. Sondheim felt they encouraged selfishness and social irresponsibility. Being responsible for other people became, for him, the final message of *Into the Woods*.

The show starts, naturally, with "Once upon a time . . ." A nattily dressed narrator says it, but then there is a startling burst from the orchestra. It warns the audience that despite the familiarity of the fairy tales, there are surprises ahead. The burst launches a rhythm in the strings, a steady staccato of quarter notes. It is a vamp to get the evening started.

"I wanted it to be jaunty," Sondheim says of that vamp, for these characters are regularly walking through the woods. The steady beat, or variations of it, will thread the show together and keep its pace.

The narrator continues, ". . . in a far-off kingdom lived a fair maiden, a sad young lad and a childless Baker with his Wife." And there they are, in adjacent cottages on a set that looks like a children's pop-up picture book. With that the introduction to the title number starts, as they all sing of their wishes. Cinderella wants to go to the King's three-day Festival, the Baker and his Wife want a child, and Jack wants his cow to give some milk.

CINDERELLA	BAKER & WIFE	JACK
The King is giving a Festival.	More than life . . .	I wish . . .
I wish to go to the Festival . . .	More than riches . . .	
	BAKER'S WIFE	I wish my
	More than anything . . .	cow would
		give us
		some milk.
	BAKER	
More than anything . . .	I wish we had a child.	
	BAKER'S WIFE	
	I want a child . . .	(to his cow)
I wish to go to the Festival.		Please, pal.

Thus the show is launched and with it, the song "Into the Woods." This piece will provide a musical continuity heard on and off throughout the evening. It is inspired by such children's songs as "The Farmer in the Dell," "Here We Go 'Round the Mulberry Bush," and perhaps most consciously, "Heigh-Ho, Heigh-Ho (It's Off to Work We Go)" from the Disney movie *Snow White*. These all have steady, jaunty, strollable staccato beats, and "Into the Woods" definitely establishes that same rhythm.

There has been a trend toward making opening numbers as long as possible, so as to establish fully the musical convention. The opening number of *Into the Woods* was to date Sondheim's longest and most ambitious sequence of interwoven music, lyrics, and dialogue. In it, many of the other characters are introduced: Little Red Ridinghood, Cinderella's Stepsisters, a Witch, even characters some may have forgotten from the fairy tales—Jack's Mother, for instance, and Cinderella's Father. Still to come are Rapunzel, Little Red Ridinghood's Grandmother, the Big Bad Wolf, and *two* Prince Charmings. Even without them, the number covers a tremendous amount of exposition, continuing for some thirteen minutes. That is a theater eternity, so if the audience is to be held for all that time, the number must seem to play in a trice. Otherwise the show will be lost along with the audience's attention.

The story is told within it as Little Red Ridinghood goes to the Baker, singing,

> I wish . . .
>
> It's not for me,
> It's for my Granny in the woods.
> A loaf of bread, please—

while Cinderella's nasty Stepmother throws a pot of lentils into the fireplace and snarls,

> I have emptied a pot of lentils into the ashes for you.
> If you have picked them out again in two hours' time,
> you shall go to the ball with us.

The Witch tells the Baker that his parents stole from her garden.

> I said, "Fair is fair:
> You can let me have the baby
> That your wife will bear.
>
> And we'll call it square."

That baby, the Baker's sister, is (though he doesn't learn it till later) none other than Rapunzel of the long golden tresses, locked high in a tower. Warming to this sense of coincidental humor, Sondheim and Lapine add that the Baker's father took something else from the Witch's garden:

The special beans!

I let him go,
I didn't know
He'd stolen my beans!
I was watching him crawl
Back over the wall—!

And then bang! Crash!
And the lightning flash!
And—well, that's another story,
Never mind—

But the Witch is not yet finished, for angrily,

I laid a little spell on them—
You, too, son—
That your family tree
Would always be
A barren one . . .

Next door, the Witch continues, now explaining to the Baker and his Wife how they can reverse the curse and have children. Sondheim deftly sets this detailed exposition into lyrics:

You wish to have
The curse reversed?
I'll need a certain
Potion first.

Go to the wood and bring me back
One: the cow as white as milk,
Two: the cape as red as blood,
Three: the hair as yellow as corn,
Four: the slipper as pure as gold.

Bring me these
Before the chime
Of midnight
In three days' time,
And you shall have,
I guarantee,
A child as perfect
As child can be.

Go to the wood!

Cross-cutting yet again, the focus returns to Cinderella's Stepmother and Stepsisters, who are leaving for the palace. By now, there has been such an accumulation of urgency, such goals, such purposes, such nervousness, and such anticipation that when the ongoing vamp—that pulsating, walking rhythm—propels the opening sequence toward its conclusion, a real head of steam has been built up.

ALL (variously)

To see—
To sell—
To get—

To bring—
To make—
To lift—
To go to the Festival—!

Into the woods!
Into the woods!
Into the woods!
Then out of the woods
And home before dark!

In writing the music for *Into the Woods*, Sondheim broke with his practice of finding a composer to serve as inspiration. As a result there is a certain disparity of musical styles in this show. He says, "I wanted it to have a dry sound so it wouldn't get like the wet Walt Disney," but his own sound *is* dry. "I wanted it to be very simple in the sense of *diatonic* [based on the do-re-mi scale] and 'up'—bouncy, bubbly."

He feels that with its light dissonances, its occasionally sharp but not jarring harmonies, and its "crisp" lyrics, the score is not unlike *Forum*, *Company*, or *Merrily We Roll Along*. It does share a Broadway flavor with those shows, except that *Into the Woods* is a small-scaled work and doesn't flex their show business muscles; it is a chamber musical with a chamber music feel to it.

The first of the characters to go into the woods is Red Ridinghood on the way to her grandmother's house. She is confronted by the Wolf, whose approach is amorous and whose intentions are gustatory. "Hello, Little Girl" reflects his duplicity—first the leer in a bluesy beginning, with lots of sinister dissonance and a deep bass accompaniment, almost like Sportin' Life's songs in *Porgy and Bess*; then the number becomes a soft-shoe glide, smooth and sly as vaudeville, complete with brush strokes on the snare drums. Throbbing beneath it is the show's opening vamp, the steady, pulsating beat. The number is fun and funny, always getting a hand.

Next the Baker fulfills the first of the Witch's demands, finding a cow as white as milk. He pays Jack for it with five of the six beans he finds in his coat pocket. As he counts them out, a xylophone strikes a tone for each, stating a beans melody—B flat, E flat, F, D, C—that Sondheim will cash in on later. Meantime Jack bids a forlorn farewell to Milky-White. His song ("I Guess This Is Goodbye") is nearly maudlin, although Sondheim considers it a real love song (if one with a comic ending). At least it's short.

On the other hand, the ensuing "Maybe They're Magic" provides the Baker and his Wife with a real husband-and-wife dialogue. Here is a compelling, even enthralling melody accompanied by harmonies that all but pay homage to the Ravel string quartet. This piece deals with a fairy-tale couple in contemporary terms—a marriage in which the wife, stronger than the husband, intimidates him into behaving against his principles. He feels guilty for having given Jack only beans in exchange for the cow. His Wife has no qualms about that, for she believes that the end—in this case, having a child—justifies the means, or as Sondheim puts it punningly,

No, what matters is that
Everyone tells tiny lies—
What's important, really, is the size.

Only three more tries
And we'll have our prize.
When the end's in sight,
You'll realize:
If the end is right,
It justifies
The beans!

Into the Woods is very much about morality. As Lapine says, "The notion of lying and what these characters have to do to get what they want is an important theme." Morality also plays an important part in Sondheim's life. It would be difficult to lie to him twice.

By now the woods are like Grand Central Station. Red Ridinghood has momentarily escaped the Wolf, while Cinderella runs into the Baker's Wife, who is fascinated with the ball and the Prince ("Is he charming?/They say he's charming"). Her duet with Cinderella ("A Very Nice Prince") is a musical interlude, rather than a formal song, but its lyrics are the thing. They define the Wife's dishonorableness; they dramatize Cinderella's uncertainty about the Prince; they continue the Wife's search for the Witch's requirements (golden shoes now); and they reveal that a stalk is growing from Jack's beans. Sondheim's lyrics deliver all of this information while humorously setting colloquial expressions in a storybook context.

BAKER'S WIFE

Is he everything you've ever wanted?

CINDERELLA

Would I know?

BAKER'S WIFE

Well, I know.

CINDERELLA

But how can you know what you want
Till you get what you want
And you see if you like it?

Now they are all moving quickly through the woods, not only the Baker's Wife and Cinderella but also her father, Stepmother, and Stepsisters, the Baker, Little Red Ridinghood, Rapunzel, Jack, his Mother and the Witch. The first midnight strikes; the Witch has given the Baker and his Wife just three days to satisfy her demands, the same three days as the Prince's three-day Festival. Jack, meantime, has climbed the beanstalk and stolen some of the Giant's gold despite the hospitality of the Giant's wife. He returns terrified and sings of what he's seen to a rather catchy, loping melody not unlike a Harold Arlen show tune.

A big tall terrible giant at the door,
A big tall terrible lady giant sweeping the floor.
And she gives you food
And she gives you rest
And she draws you close
To her giant breast,
And you know things now that you never knew before,
Not till the sky.

There are two distinct strains in this wonderful song. The main theme is a sly and original variation of traditional theater music. It alternates with an anxious theme set to a jittery rhythm when Jack sings of what happened up there:

And your heart is lead
And your stomach stone
And you're really scared
Being all alone . . .

Composer Sondheim helps lyricist Sondheim by putting a painfully extended dissonance on "alone," giving the word the anxiety that is its due. The song, which is quite affecting, trades in an emotional quality similar to *Sweeney Todd*'s "Not While I'm Around." Different musically, they are both sung by a simpleminded lad frightened by a powerful force.

Right:
Danielle Ferland played Red Ridinghood to Robert Westenberg's Wolf in Into the Woods. *The score for this show displays everything Sondheim has to offer, from the catchy to the esoteric.*

Far right:
Familiar fairy-tale characters were reinterpreted in Into the Woods: *Jack the Giant Killer became a simple-minded murderer and Red Ridinghood was a street-smart kid with a penchant for cracking wise.*

Costumes for the show were designed by Ann Hould-Ward; the Baker and the Baker's Wife are shown here.

In this more complicated case, however, the Giant is not the evil one; the evil one is Jack, who stole the gold. ("What interested Steve and me," Lapine said, "is that the nicer people would be less honest.") Like the Baker's Wife, he will pay for his immorality.

Of all the characters, as Lapine points out, "the Witch [for all her bluster] is in some ways the most honest of all. I think that theme is evident throughout the show—that you can't always equate nice with good."

Meantime a comic moment is at hand, as two obnoxious Prince Charmings run into each other, and they are brothers. Sondheim has always been good with such braggarts, from Miles Gloriosus in *Forum* to Count Carl-Magnus in *A Little Night Music*. In "Agony," a barcarole-like operetta piece arranged for a richly harmonized duet, each dares the other to match his suffering. One is in love with Rapunzel, locked high in a doorless tower and dementedly babbling a wordless obbligato; the other has lost Cinderella, as she fled his ball at midnight. Their self-centered suffering always gets healthy laughter.

If Sondheim is influenced in any area by his collaborators, it is in the area of humor. James Lapine has the kind of quirky humor that hearkens back to *Forum*, and it is reflected in Sondheim's lyrics.

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

You are everything maidens could wish for!

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

Then why no—?

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

Do I know?

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

The girl must be mad!

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

You know nothing of madness
Till you're climbing her hair
And you see her up there
As you're nearing her,
All the while hearing her
"Ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah-ah—"

BOTH

Agony!

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

Misery!

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

Woe!

BOTH

Though it's different for each.

That dry last line may be the funniest. Sondheim usually writes songs in the order they are performed, unless he is stuck for an idea, and he is not stuck here. The music for these songs is rich and darling, one number laughing its way out, another charming its way in. The Baker and Wife follow with a duet that has all the wit and catchiness of old-fashioned musical comedy—except that it deals with psychological material.

They are doing well in their quest for the Witch's demands. They have the white cow, the hood from Little Red, and some yellow hair, which the Baker's Wife yanked from Rapunzel's head. All that is lacking is the golden slipper. The Wife encourages the Baker ("You've changed, /You're daring. /You're different in the woods"). Her music is lyrical and comforting. She makes him feel good about their marriage, and the music is cheerfully responsive to that. In the spirit of Rodgers and Hart, "It Takes Two" is a lilting and entirely engaging musical comedy number.

Its lyrics are wise, witty, and technically precise. The notion is for Baker and Wife to compliment each other, she praising his manliness, he acknowledging her help after first insisting on going it alone. Sondheim works his way through enough plays on numbers and tenses, colloquialisms and rhymes, to make the overriding wisdom almost unnoticeable, when in fact it is unmistakable.

BAKER

It takes one
To begin, but then once
You've begun,
It takes two of you.
It's no fun,
But what needs to be done
You can do
When there's two of you.

If I dare,
It's because I'm becoming
Aware of us,

As a pair of us,
Each accepting a share
Of what's there.

That was only a quintuple rhyme in the last chorus. Then the song is resolved with conclusive harmonies and a blizzard of word games about numbers, as the couple looks forward to a baby at last. Sondheim starts toward the end with the "walking" rhythm that has been running through the show. By the time he gets to the finish line, he has taken this delightful song through the kind of harmonic changes that bring smiles to everyone but the musically dead.

Beyond woods,
Beyond witches and slippers and hoods,
Just the two of us—
Beyond lies,
Safe at home with our beautiful prize,
Just the few of us.

It takes trust.
It takes just
A bit more
And we're done.
We want four,
We had none.
We've got three.
We need one.
It takes two.

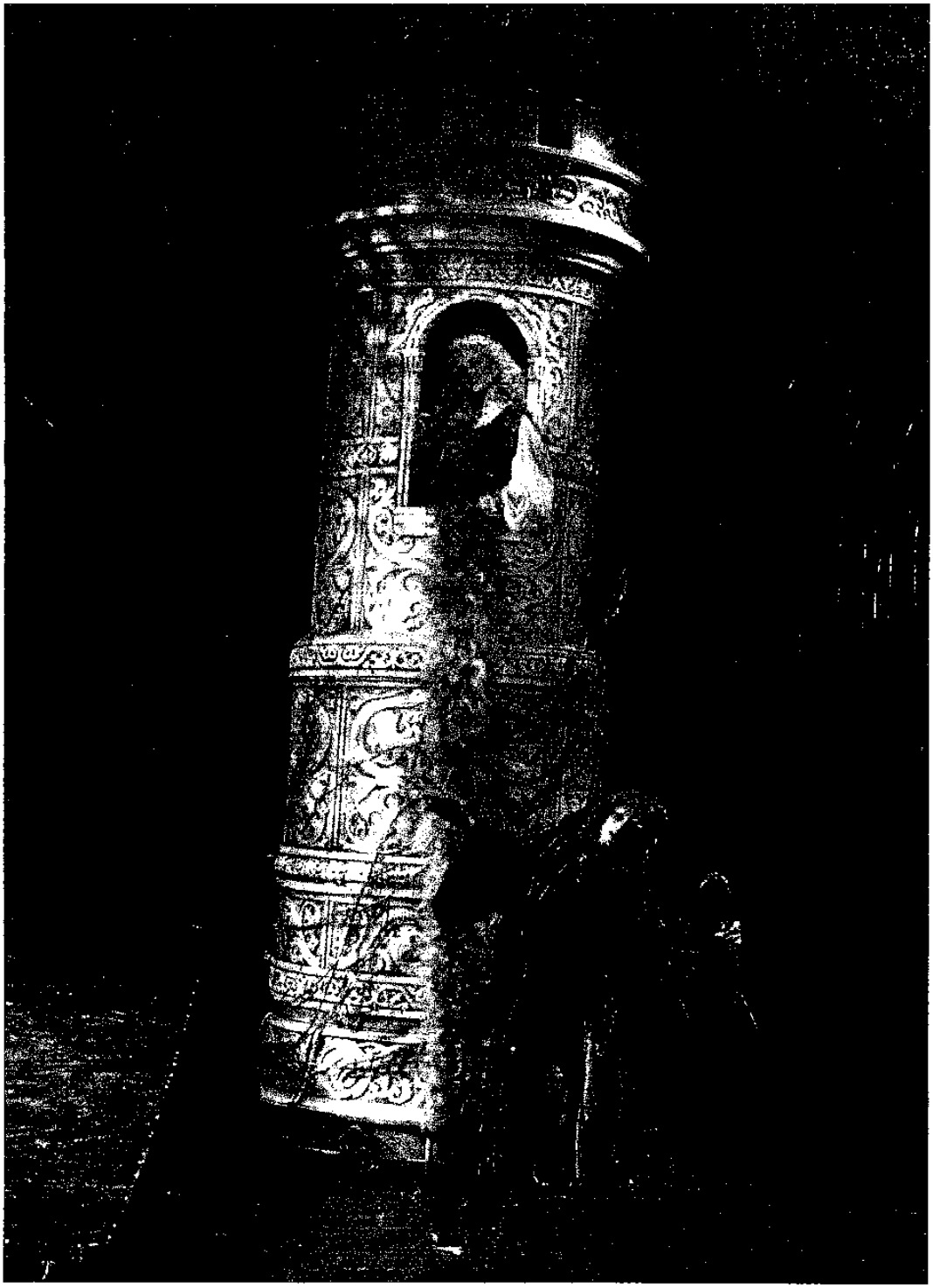
In the thick of such delightful work, Sondheim does not forget the larger purpose. Planted in the lyric is the corrupt seed, the trouble ahead—"Beyond lies/Safe at home with our beautiful prize." For this Wife is insidiously encouraging her husband to act immorally. Meantime the second midnight passes, leaving only one day for the Baker, his Wife, and Cinderella to get what they wish.

The atmosphere is now turning ominous. The Witch dotes on Rapunzel, having had her since infancy, and panics when she learns that a prince has been visiting the girl at the tower. Her song is needy, "Stay with Me," and her words are maternal—"Children must listen"—but they are also threatening, for this is a fearsome mother. Now Sondheim's beat becomes a frightening version of the show's signature jaunt. Indeed, the song starts with Rapunzel's shriek of fright.

She wants to leave the tower, which sends the Witch first to raging ("Why could you not obey?/Children should listen"), then imploring ("I am ugly/I embarrass you"). Although "Stay with Me" is more of a sung scenelet than a song, it does transmit one of the authors' messages: "Stay a child while you can be a child."

Frustrated, the Witch flies into a fury, cuts off Rapunzel's long yellow hair, and exiles the girl, while her pursuing prince falls into a patch of thorns and is blinded. Red Ridinghood has turned bloodthirsty, replacing the cape she gave to the Baker with a new one made from the skin of the Wolf. Jack, obsessed with his mother's poverty, has made a second climb up the beanstalk, this time stealing the Giant's golden eggs and the hen that laid them. Fairyland seems imbued with immorality.

Then Cinderella enters on one shoe, having intentionally left the other on the steps of the palace. She is the character that Sondheim and Lapine discussed at greatest length, and perhaps taking all of this too seriously, they decided she had a self-worth problem. In "On the Steps of the Palace," Sondheim even provides her with a self-questioning song to serve this



Bernadette Peters played The Witch to Pamela Winslow's Rapunzel. Peters got the role almost by accident. Lunching with Sondheim one day she learned that the Baker and his Wife had been cast but that the part of the Witch was still free. "The next day," Sondheim remembered, "she called about the part. . . . It would never have occurred to us to ask her to do the second lead."

identity crisis. In it she reviews her thoughts as she stood with one shoe stuck in the pitch that the Prince had spread in anticipation of her flight. This becomes so complex, and the music is so muted to support the complicated lyric, that after a while the song becomes a run of words. From moment to moment, funny lines pop out ("Why not stay and be caught?/You think, well, it's a thought"), and Sondheim plants the shoe clue in the thick of nine straight rhymes to emphasize that Cinderella intentionally left it behind on the steps.

> You know what your decision is,
> Which is not to decide.
> You'll just leave him a clue:
> For example, a shoe.
> And then see what he'll do.

Now it's he and not you
Who is stuck with a shoe,
In a stew,
In the goo,
And you've learned something too,
Something you never knew,
On the steps of the palace.

What she learned, Sondheim says, is the power of flirtation and the value, sometimes, of letting someone else make a difficult decision for you. Not everyone would agree with that; indeed, not everyone would be so interested in Cinderella's psychology—or be able to follow all of this.

When she trades her remaining golden slipper to the Baker's Wife for a good pair of running shoes, the couple has everything the Witch has asked for, and that is the beginning of everyone getting their wishes. But one of the good signs is actually a bad one: The Giant is killed falling when Jack cuts the beanstalk behind him as he flees. Everyone is too satisfied to worry. Theirs is not mere happiness, but fairy-tale happiness—happiness "Ever After."

For this first-act finale, Sondheim provides some of his most spirited music ever and a rare example of choral writing. Its style is mock-operetta, and as such the piece holds its own in company as heady as Bernstein's *Candide* overture. "Ever After" sets out at a dizzy pace, the show's most breathless yet. It erupts into dazzling counterpoint, with jubilant inner voices and exhilarating syncopation. Short as it is, before the piece is over, one's breath and heart are won away. For sheer joy in show music, only a Gershwin overture can compare.

Though it's fearful,
Though it's deep, though it's dark,
And though you may lose the path,
Though you may encounter wolves,
You mustn't stop,
You mustn't swerve,
You mustn't ponder,
You have to act!
When you know your wish,
If you want your wish,
You can have your wish,
But you can't just wish—
No, to get your wish—

Here the music, the orchestra, and the ensemble plow right back into the main theme. Sondheim brilliantly recapitulates, in one brief lyric, all the wishes, all the journeys, first for the good, then the bad—everything that has happened.

Into the woods to lift the spell,
Into the woods to lose the longing.
Into the woods to have the child,
To wed the Prince,
To get the money,
To save the house,
To kill the wolf,
To find the father,
To conquer the kingdom,
To have, to wed,

To get, to save,
To kill, to keep,
To go to the Festival!

Into the woods,
Into the woods,
Into the woods,
Then out of the woods—
And happy ever after!

With the start of the second act, everyone has more wishes. Cinderella wants another ball, Jack misses the Giant's kingdom in the sky, and the Baker needs another room in his cottage for the baby. Still they feel "happy ever after"—until the roof falls in, quite literally, with a great crash. The Baker's cottage has caved in; the Witch's garden, next door, is destroyed and so is Red Ridinghood's cottage.

So, once more, it is "into the woods," this time to find the Giant they all realize is responsible for the destruction. Although the melody is the same, Sondheim's harmonies lend an eeriness and a wariness to what had at first been a theme for adventure. It is into the woods to slay, to flee, to fix, to battle, to, as Cinderella sings, "see what the trouble is."

Meantime the two Prince Charmings sing a reprise of "Agony" that is even funnier than the first time, for one of these newlyweds has now fallen in love with the Sleeping Beauty, while the other has discovered Snow White. Perhaps in studying Sondheim's growth as a composer and artist, his wizardry with lyrics has been taken for granted. That talent is as gaudy as ever:

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

I found a casket
Entirely of glass—
(as Cinderella's Prince starts to shrug)
No, it's unbreakable.
Inside—don't ask it—
A maiden, alas,
Just as unwakable—

BOTH

What unmistakable agony!
Is the way always barred?

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

She has skin white as snow—

CINDERELLA'S PRINCE

Did you learn her name?

RAPUNZEL'S PRINCE

No,
There's a dwarf standing guard.

With everyone combing the woods, the ground shakes and a female Giant looms above—the enraged widow—and she demands Jack. Slaying the Giant may have been heroic in the fairy tale, but it is murder to Lapine, and he uses that insight to start an epidemic of misfortune among the fairy-tale folk.

That is the start of the second act, but Lapine, like many writers, is going to depend on death when at a loss for story invention. The first to go is the narrator, who is sacrificed to the Giant almost for a laugh. Then Jack's Mother is accidentally killed, and Rapunzel is trampled

to death by the Giant. The grief-struck Witch swears to hand Jack over to the Giant because of that. Her "Lament" is a powerful song, overflowing with a mother's pain. Its theme is the five notes Sondheim had designated for the beans—B flat, E flat, F, D, C. Is that because all the trouble began with the beans? It isn't really clear, but as she sings the music cries out with lunging tones for the lyric's open, sobbing vowels.

> How could I, who loved you as you were?
> How could I have shielded you from her
> *(looking up the Giant's home)*
> Or them . . .
> *(looking at the group)*

This is the most emotional song in the show, and its feeling is reflected in the bass line serving as a foundation for this mournful and elegiac melody. The words express Sondheim's lifelong concern with teaching and his sensitivity to parenthood, despite never having had a child of his own. He agrees with Lapine that, most of all, the show is about parents and children.

> No matter what you say,
> Children won't listen.
> No matter what you know,
> Children refuse
> To learn.
>
> Guide them along the way,
> Still they won't listen.
> Children can only grow
> From something you love
> To something you lose . . .

Sondheim declines to see this wonderfully pained melody to its conclusion, instead cutting it short to stress the sense of loss. As relief, he provides a song for Cinderella's cheating husband, a lecherous Prince Charming. It is as funny as "Agony." Like Leonard Bernstein, when he is writing a funny song, Sondheim seems to write prettier and catchier music, as if he is (a) enjoying the laughs and (b) musically relaxed because he knows everyone is paying attention to the words. "Any Moment" is a delightful stretch of waltz, even danceable (but, like all of Sondheim's shows except *Follies*, there is virtually no dancing in *Into the Woods*). To "Any Moment," Cinderella's Prince seduces the Baker's Wife, beginning with the suggestion,

> Any moment, big or small,
> Is a moment, after all.
> Seize the moment, skies may fall
> Any moment.

He continues to kiss her and then carries her into the woods, after which she asks whether they will see each other again. His response is a cad's:

> This was just a moment in the woods.
> Our moment.

And she is left to ask, "What was that?"

Then she reflects on such "Moments in the Woods." It is submitted that Stephen Sondheim is the only figure in Broadway musical history who would write a charm song about moral compromise. The song begins with a romantic verse ("Did a Prince really kiss me?") set to one of the composer's patented French waltzes. Wondering "Was it wrong?", the Wife

reminds herself to be realistic and "Stop dreaming . . . Back to child, back to husband," because there is right and wrong, "shouldn'ts and shoulds."

But, she ponders, is a choice necessary? The music becomes appropriately assertive and beguiling, as the lyric slyly offers a solution to a choice between righteous duty and wrongful pleasure:

> Why not both instead?
> There's the answer if you're clever:
> Have a child for warmth,
> And a Baker for bread,
> And a Prince for whatever—

Drawing a moral for herself, if not a moral one, she concludes,

> Let the moment go . . .
> Don't forget it for a moment, though.
> Just remembering you've had an "and,"
> When you're back to "or,"
> Make the "or" mean more
> Than it did before.
> Now I understand—

Amusing as this number is, it is incidental to the action and it does not carry much force. In fact the second act has already begun to loosen, if not unravel entirely, and in virtually the same place as in *Sunday in the Park with George*—when the show seems naturally ended because the main story (there, of the painting; here, the fairy tales) is over. In the first show, there was virtually no plot after the intermission; in this one, there is too much.

In the second act, the idea is for the atmosphere to darken as the characters, having gotten their wishes, deal with the consequences. That starts when the Baker's Wife is crushed to death by a tree that the Giant knocks over. The Baker, Cinderella, Little Red Ridinghood, and Jack all blame each other for this second Giant, singing a patter song, "Your Fault." The Witch shuts them up with her "Last Midnight," which begins with a good and spooky theme and evolves into a mocking waltz, which is familiar territory for Sondheim. As with the last few songs, though, he seems to be struggling to find substance or purpose for his musical numbers. In this case, what begins as a warning veers into moralizing and concludes with the Witch leaving them alone to cope by themselves.

It is interesting how Sondheim the composer and Sondheim the lyricist affect each other. When there is a real dramatic purpose for a song, something substantial to be said, the music seems to take energy and heart from the words, inspired by the mood and the ideas ("Lament" is a good example). But when, as with these last two songs, there is no real reason for the song, the music seems more like good work and less like good art.

When a play runs out of plot ideas, of deaths, of steam, the last resort is moralizing. Badly needing to end, *Into the Woods* heads for the final curtain trading its surprises, good humor, and originality for moral platitudes and shorthand wisdom. The Baker throws his hands up and asks for "No More"—for respite, for surcease, for no more questions, and:

> No more riddles.
> No more jests.
> No more curses you can't undo,
> Left by fathers you never knew.
> No more quests.
> No more feelings.
> Time to shut the door.
> Just—no more.

But the tragedies that have befallen him have not been convincing enough for us to identify with his spiritual exhaustion. As "No More" goes on (and it does), its overwrought decency is replaced by something even worse, a cry for utopian simplicity.

> No more giants,
> Waging war.
> Can't we just pursue our lives
> With our children and our wives?

Reminiscent of the finale of *Candide* ("Make Our Garden Grow," by Leonard Bernstein and Richard Wilbur), this is just too falsely naive after the sophisticated taste preceding. Affirmation may be traditional for finales, but it didn't hang comfortably on *Company* and it doesn't hang comfortably here. It just isn't *Sondheim*, and that goes back to his not writing like Oscar Hammerstein. Nice isn't always good. Moreover, although "No More" sounds like a finale it isn't the finale. It sets one up by asking,

> How do you ignore
> All the witches,
> All the curses,
> All the wolves, all the lies,
> The false hopes, the goodbyes,
> The reverses—

That cues the similarly inspirational "No One Is Alone," which has been criticized for being trite and sentimental. Sondheim is rankled by that, but his defense is not strong. "It means," he says, "everything you do affects everyone else." There is no reason to doubt his sincerity, but as Cinderella says to Red Ridinghood,

> Mother cannot guide you.
> Now you're on your own.
> Only me beside you.
> Still, you're not alone.
> No one is alone, truly.
> No one is alone.

She certainly sounds like the greeting-card platitude Sondheim is disavowing. It is only later in the song that she sings of communal responsibility.

There is yet another finale, "Children Will Listen," to tell the audience that besides communal responsibility, the show is also about parents and children. This is simply too many finales and messages, and if a show has to announce its moral, it would be better off dropping the subject. There is almost a sigh of relief from the show itself when *Into the Woods* finally slides into the final reprise of the title song. There are still more morals—this musical simply does not tire of giving advice—but at least they come at the end of the story, where morals belong.

> Into the woods,
> But not too fast,
> Or what you wish
> You lose at last.

However, the show scores so many points in its first hour and a half that the goodwill carries it along, even when things fizzle toward the end.

Into the Woods was first staged at the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego and, with revisions, was brought to Broadway's Martin Beck Theatre on November 5, 1987, playing a healthy 764 performances and ultimately turning a profit. That made it the first profitable Sondheim show in the eight years since *Sweeney Todd*. That was a fact of Sondheim's commercial life.