A Feminist Perspective on Popularized Fairy Tales

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

by

Fayelin Benzenbower

Thesis Advisor
Professor Jean Amman

Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana

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Abstract

Fairy tales are common in the upbringing of children. In these fairy tales, there are various stereotypes or gender roles that are upheld, but could be detrimental to a child’s development. Looking at three fairy tales, popularized by Disney, reveals that the female images portrayed are often too difficult to achieve, but society still expects young girls to conform to this ideal of the perfect girl. In *The Little Mermaid* (1989), *Beauty and the Beast* (1991), and *Sleeping Beauty* (1959), the female characters are portrayed as being damsels in distress and often have to change themselves to have a happy ending. The purpose of this project is to provide young girls with a more realistic image of a strong female character.

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Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Author's Statement</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Mermaid and her Kingdom</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Beauty of the Truth</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breathing Deep, Facing Fears</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Author's Statement

A Feminist Perspective on Popularized Fairy Tales

My idea for my Creative Honors Project stems from an extra credit assignment from one of my psychology courses. The course was Psychology of Women; it was a very eye-opening experience and, perhaps, one of my favorite courses that I have taken thus far. The assignment was to rewrite, in about a page, any fairy tale to make it a feminist fairy tale. I want to take it a step further and rewrite three popularized fairy tales and make them more positive for young girls.

Never have I wanted to do this more than now. Before returning to Ball State for my senior year, I worked as a school bus assistant for my hometown's school system. I worked on a bus full of kindergartners. I had a variety of children on the bus—different ethnicities, socio-economic statuses, home lives, and so on. Before I was able to the children by name and face, I used their backpacks as identification. The variety of backpacks the young girls had were princess themed to boy bands to Hello Kitty. My reason for bringing up the children I worked with is the princess backpacks. I overheard a conversation between two or three girls about what “pretty” means. One girl even told another that she was not “pretty” because she did not look like the princess image on her backpack. Because of this situation, I am more determined to rewrite fairy tales that have realistic, but positive, ideals for little girls to follow.

I know that it might seem odd that a psychology major, like me, would take on this project, but it really is psychology in its foundation. Media has such an impact on impressionable children that it has been an area of research for some
time. Media often upholds stereotypes that females try to live up to, many times putting herself at risk of a mental or eating disorder. Even at elementary age, it has been documented that girls are worrying about their weight.

The relationship between society and media is cyclical. Society tells corporations what is wanted in the media, yet the corporations give society certain choices to pick from. It's an ongoing process that doesn't seem to be changing any time soon. The fairy tales I am toying with have been published in various forms of media: books, toys, and movies. The versions of my chosen fairy tales I will be focusing on are the versions Disney produced.

Do I think Disney purposely infused their children's movies with stereotypes and unobtainable standards for things? No, I do not. But I do believe that people are a product of their environment. By this, I mean that the people making decisions about what to produce unintentionally infuse the movies with ideals and images from their own time. This again highlights the circle-like relationship between media and people.

Now fairy tales have been around for centuries. According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, the term "fairy tale" was first used in the year 1749. A fairy tale is often a fantasy-based story that typically ends in a "happily ever after" situation, or, at least, that is what we are familiar with. The fairy tales that we know today are vastly different than their original plot. The three fairy tales that I will be rewriting are The Little Mermaid, Beauty and the Beast, and Sleeping Beauty.
I hope that, after reading my fairytales, people just think—think about what images are being presented to young, impressionable minds. I'm not asking or telling anyone to change who they are, what they teach their children, or how they raise them, but to just think about things we are familiar with and how they truly affect those we love.
The Mermaid and Her Kingdom

Hans Christian Andersen published the Little Mermaid story in 1836. Between the modernized, well-known Disney version and the original, many things were kept similar and others were changed. Possibly the biggest difference that Disney made was that Ariel married the Prince in the end. Between the endings by Andersen, Disney, and me, which do you prefer?

Once upon a time, a time when castles were newly built and the sea was a jewel with no comparison, a young sea princess faced the greatest decision in her life. In the end, she could follow only one voice. That voice was her own.

On a bright, sparkling day, the youngest mermaid princess woke up to tickling bubbles and soft giggles. The princess swatted at the annoyance and turned over to snuggle back into her spongy pillow. More giggles were heard and more bubbles tickled. The princess made a growl-like sound and opened one eye to see her sisters crowded around her shell-like bed. Her sisters had large grins lighting up their faces.

“Oh, little Ariel, it is time to wake!” a blonde haired mermaid said.

“Come on, baby sister! It’s your day!” a brunette cried enthusiastically.

“Wake up, Ariel! It is time to celebrate! It’s your birthday!” An auburn haired sister grabbed the edge of Ariel’s seaweed woven blanket and pulled. Ariel did not want to let go. She rolled off the edge of her bed along with the blanket.

“Oomph!” The youngest sister looked up from her spot on the floor. She eyed her blanket in the hands of her oldest sister. “If it’s my day, why must I wake so early, Attina?”

“Early? Ariel, it is well past noon. We did let you sleep in.” Attina dropped the blanket and put her hands on her hips. “It is time to get up. You need to eat. And dress. Father has quite a few things planned for this day. The ball tonight is tradition, and you
must be there!” Ariel sighed and pushed herself off the cold floor. “Yes, yes. I know! I’m up now. And I don’t have any intention of missing the ball. I’m finally sixteen years old! I get to see the world up above! I’ll be ready in less than ten minutes, Attina. I’ll come down to the throne room when I am finished, okay?”

Now wide-awake, Ariel was ecstatic about her birthday. It was tradition for a newly of age mermaid to get to go to the surface and look about. She waved at her sisters as they left her room and she twirled in excitement. She sat down at her vanity and grabbed her coral-made brush. She gently detangled her fiery red hair. She looked into the mirror. “Do I look any different?” she mumbled to her empty room. “I certainly don’t feel any different.” She shrugged and smiled at her reflection. She put her brush down; and with one last attempt at fixing her bangs, she left her vanity for the throne room.

Upon entering the giant room, she was greeted with a hug from her father, King Triton. His long, fluffy beard scratched at her nose, but she returned the hug with as much gusto as her father. King Triton pulled back and smiled down at his youngest daughter. “You have grown so much, Ariel. Your mother would be so proud of you. And to think, it is your turn to see the surface, but that is for much later. We are having a small family lunch now and then we will take a swim through Atlantica. How does that sound? Good, good.” Ariel didn’t get a chance to answer, but she was really hungry and didn’t want to be tired when she went to the surface. King Triton led them into their dining room, and they had a big lunch full of boisterous conversation and laughs all around.
After lunch the king and his daughters proceeded to their scheduled swim through their city. Many citizens were out and about. The shops with fine shells and pearls were busy with patrons. The eateries were alive with young mer-children wanting to taste the freshly made candies and rolls. The royal family stopped here and there when shopkeepers waved at them. Everyone knew that their last princess was of age and celebrated by giving samples of various foods or trinkets that they thought the princess might like. Ariel, who had always been a nice mer-person, graciously thanked them and smiled when the mer-children wanted to give her hugs.

Ariel looked at her sisters and father. “Good,” she thought to herself, “they are all distracted.” She quietly sneaked away. She swam a good way away from the city and began her ascent to the sea’s surface. She didn’t want to wait. Her sisters got to go whenever during their birthday, so why couldn’t she? A few feet before breaking the surface, Ariel hesitated. “I know this is bad. I shouldn’t do this…but I want to! I won’t be able to see anything in the dark!” Ariel stopped murmuring to herself, took a deep breath, and flipped her tail to propel her forward. She broke through the water and into air, but she couldn’t see because it was too bright.

Finally her eyes adjusted and she was able to look about. There wasn’t much…a lot of water and a ship in the distance. Ariel scowled and crossed her arms. She spun in a slow circle and was suddenly pulled back under. She spun back around to find her father glaring at her. King Triton’s ocean colored eyes resembled turbulent waters during a great storm. “What do you think you were doing, Ariel? I am highly disappointed in you for this stunt.”
"I just wanted to see the surface in light! It'll be too dark to see anything tonight!"

Ariel argued back, but then dropped her shoulders when King Triton lifted an eyebrow and answered, "I understand this, but we have rules and traditions for a reason. What if a ship had hit you? Or worse, what if a human saw you? You could have endangered our entire kingdom. Now I feel it best if we return to the palace and rest until the ball. You are to stay in your room until it is time for your entrance. Is that clear, Ariel?"

Ariel nodded slowly, knowing that she could have been given a much harsher punishment. King Triton motioned Ariel ahead of the family, and they swam back to the palace. Upon arriving, Ariel nodded to her father and went to her room. She threw herself on the bed and buried her head under the pillow. Ariel didn't notice her door open or the shifting of her bed. She jumped when a hand touched her back; she whirled around to see Attina sitting on the edge of the bed, a pensive look darkening her normally light blue eyes. Attina looked at Ariel and spoke, "That was a very dangerous thing you did, but I understand why you did it. You thought that the ball tonight was too late to be able to see anything, right?" Ariel just nodded.

"I did the same thing, but I wasn't as sneaky as you were today. I got caught at the edge of our gardens," Attina admitted ruefully. "I know that you and I don't always get along, Ariel, but we have rules for a purpose. I think I should have shared my experience with you, but I didn't think to because Mom was here for Aquata, Andrina, and Adella. And Arista and Alana are not the types to explore like you, Ariel."

"I know what I did was wrong. . . I wish I could undo it, but I just have to deal with the consequences. But it's good to know I'm like one of my sisters!" Ariel said.

Attina smiled and gave Ariel a hug. Pushing herself up, Attina said one more thing,
“You really have grown up, little sister. You have changed, and in a good way.” With that, Attina glided out of the room. The door closed softly behind her. Ariel closed her eyes and drifted to sleep. One last thought sluggishly made its way through her mind, “I guess it takes someone else to see the changes in me...”

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With a slight groan, Ariel woke to knocking. Her door opened to reveal a servant with shockingly teal hair. The servant smiled and softly said, “The celebration is in thirty minutes, princess. Will you be needing any assistance?” Ariel shook her head “no.” The teal mermaid nodded and closed the door. Ariel stretched her arms above her head and sat up, “Time to get cleaned up.” She glided to her vanity and sat before the mirror. She began to arrange her hair in various styles, but could not decide which she liked best. With a huff, she dropped her hair and reached for a coral and pearl comb. She pinned up one side of her hair and smiled at her reflection. She practically danced out of her room and all the way into the throne room.

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Ariel giggled as King Triton spun her around the dance floor. “Daughter, it is almost time—are you ready?” he asked when the music began to fade away. Ariel’s eyes lit up and she nodded very eagerly. He took her hand and drew her up to the dais, “Mermaids and mergents! It is time for our youngest princess to gaze upon the world up above!” King Triton waved his free hand at the domed ceiling, and it slowly twisted open. He looked at Ariel and nodded toward the newly opened ceiling. She grinned and excitedly swam toward the surface.
Ariel broke through the surface and immediately brushed her hair off her face. She glanced up at the velvet sky and her mouth fell open in awe of the full moon. Color flashed and she jerked around in surprise. A few hundred meters away, a ship was anchored. Joyful sounding noises and more colored lights originated from the ship’s deck. She glanced down at the water, bit her lip, and moved toward the ship. She managed to catch a wave that allowed her to sit on a ledge to look onto the ship’s deck. Her eyes grew wide—humans! There were so many humans! A particular human caught her eye.

He was a dark haired individual with wide shoulders and a wider smile. She was admiring him when lightning whiplashed through the dark sky. Ariel immediately dove back into the water, but she didn’t get far when pieces of the ship began hitting the choppy waters. She zigged and zagged to avoid the dangerous obstacles. A blurry shape dropped by her; she caught a glimpse of dark hair and she dove for the human. She managed to catch him before he drifted down too deeply. She held onto his arm as she propelled her tail—she just had to get him back to the surface!

She broke through the watery barrier and looked toward the shore. She towed the man behind her. She managed to pull him into much shallower water and drag him onto dry sand. She gently moved his face toward her and Ariel sighed. He was a very handsome human. She jerked up when she heard the words “Prince Eric” yelled from the other side of the rocky wall. The human groaned and began to sit up. Ariel jumped back and began pushing herself back into the ocean.

“Wait! Who are you?” the dark haired man—Prince Eric—asked.
She bit her lip and whispered, “Ariel.” She shimmied the rest of the way into the water and was gone from his sight.

“Ariel... a mermaid...,” Eric mumbled out loud in bewilderment. He shook his head and looked at his men climbing over the rock wall.

Ariel flipped her tail in top speed. She really needed to get back to the throne room and pretend like nothing unusual had happened. She spied the top of the domed room and swam back through the circular opening. She plastered a smile on her face and met her dad by his throne.

“That was a long time spent above, Ariel. Anything of interest up above?” King Triton asked.

“Nothing too interesting. Just a bit of a storm,” Ariel said, her smile still in place. The merking smiled and nodded for the celebration to continue.

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Many times during the following week, the youngest mermaid princess swam to the piece of shore where she had left the human prince. Each visit, she had hoped to steal a glimpse of him, but each time disappointment was her companion. “This will be my last try,” she thought to herself. “I will go one more time and then I’ll forget about him.”

When she broke the surface, her eyes immediately looked toward the shore. There was the human! He was sitting upon a large, porous rock that was partially submerged. He was looking at a piece of driftwood and hadn’t noticed her yet. Ariel bit her lip and propelled herself forward. The soft splashing caught the human’s attention. He dropped the driftwood in surprise and slowly clambered off his perch. He dropped into the water with a grace that befitted his station.
"You're back! I can't... I thought I had dreamt it all," Prince Eric said as he knelt in the foamy seawaters. Ariel pushed herself as close to land as possible, while leaving her tail completely submerged. She gave a small smile and a shrug of her shoulders.

"I have been back many times, but this is the first I've seen you," she said with a small laugh. He grinned back. "I sat out here for hours in hopes of seeing you again. I thought I had sustained a head injury."

"You are well, though? I tried to get you back to the surface as quickly as possible," Ariel inquired softly. She sincerely hoped that the prince was in good health.

"I am quite well. Many of my men weren't sure how I made it safely, but I told them that I was lucky and caught a current that came toward shore," Prince Eric re-situated himself so that he was sitting in the surf next to the red-headed merprincess.

The two talked for hours. The sun was making its descent below the line where sky meets water. "I must go, but shall I see you again?" the little mermaid asked. Prince Eric nodded as he picked up her hand. He brought her hand to his mouth, placed a chaste kiss on its back. "Of course! I shall be waiting here at the same time tomorrow, Ariel."

She blushed as she took her hand back to push herself into the ocean. She gave a small wave and then disappeared into the depths of dark blue.

~

Over the next month, the mermaid princess and the human prince had many meetings. They spent most of their time learning about each other. They discussed what they liked to do in their free time, their families, and any other topic that crossed their
minds. One day the prince had a question that caught the mergirl off guard. Prince Eric looked at Ariel and voiced: "If you could turn human would you?"

Ariel's eyes widened. "I don't know. It's a possibility, if one knows the right people, but I don't know if I could leave the ocean."

"Could you leave it for me? We could get married. I'd be the king and you'd be by my side! It would be wonderful!" Prince Eric ecstatically said, while moving his arms energetically. In all his flurry of motion and words, he didn't notice that Ariel got quiet. He continued to spout off future plans: from the wedding to how they would raise their children.

He looked at her, "You said 'if one knows the right people,' does this mean you do? Do you know how to become human?"

"I do know of one who would probably help, but it would come at such a high price—." She was cut off by Prince Eric exclaiming, "Will you go tonight? We could be together starting tomorrow!"

She began to get annoyed. She gave a huff and asked, "What about you? Would you become a merman for me? The sea witch could make you breathe underwater just as well as she could make me walk."

Prince Eric stumbled over his words, his mouth hanging open for a split second. "Why would I want to live in the ocean? I have an entire kingdom to inherit! I have to be here! You have six older sisters to fight over the crown!"

"Fight over the crown? You know that's not how it works! I could inherit Atlantica just as easily as Attina could! It all depends on the Trident—but that's beside
the point! Why do you ask me to give up my entire life when you’ll give no compromise?”

“I thought you loved me! If you loved me, then you’d have taken the chance to be with me forever!” snapped Prince Eric. His anger was very evident in the way his jaw was clenched.

Ariel glared and crossed her arms. “I thought I loved you, but now I see how you really are. I won’t become a human for someone who wouldn’t become a merperson for me. A relationship isn’t about one person giving up everything for the other!”

“Enough with the dramatics! If you’ll not visit that sea witch, then our time is done! I am to find a complacent woman for a bride, not a willful half-creature.” Prince Eric stood up, his movements jerky in his haste.

“Half-creature? Better a half-creature with a mind and spirit, than a shell of a human. I will not see the witch for any other reason than if she were to visit the kingdom. I will not become less of me to please an arrogant, selfish prince who has no thought beyond the tip of his nose.” Ariel quickly pushed herself into the ocean’s welcoming waters. Prince Eric stood looking at the last spot he saw a sea green tail flicker. He shook his head and turned toward his castle.
In the end, the merprincess listened to her own voice. She found the change in herself she had so wished to find on her birthday. That change allowed her to take the throne when the Trident found her most suitable for the title of Queen of Atlantica years later. While the princess-turned-queen had a very successful reign, she never once regretted giving up the human who had asked her to give up everything.
The Beauty of the Truth

Madame Gabrielle de Villeneuve wrote this short story in 1740. It was vastly different than the popularized version today. For instance, Beast never transformed back into a human in the original tale.

Once upon a time, in a time before magic lost its sparkle, a castle fell under a spell. This spell was a nasty one; this enchantment simply could not be broken. Even though the castle’s inhabitants tried very hard, they were unsuccessful. They needed another individual—an individual that was of such true character that she brought out the true self of others. This is the story of how one girl, by being true to herself and her mind, broke a spell and changed the lives of those in the castle.

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The morning light danced between the shutter’s slats, falling across the face of a young woman. Her brunette hair caught the rays of sunlight as she sat up in her bed. She stretched her arms above her head and then pushed her blanket down; it was time for her to get ready for the day. She breezed through her normal routine, mentally checking her to-do list.

Out loud she began listing her errands: “I need to go to the market for bread. I need to return my book to the library. And Papa needed something….”

“Belle, are you awake yet?” a gruff voice called from another part of the house.

“Yes, Papa. I’ll be out in a few minutes!” Belle called back. She hurriedly tied her hair with a ribbon and tucked a stray piece of hair behind her ear before leaving her room. Belle walked into the kitchen area to see her Papa drinking a large mug of hot tea and looking at some papers. “Probably for his new invention,” she thought to herself.
Belle poured herself a glass of water and grabbed an apple to munch on. She sat opposite her papa and waited for him to finish looking at the papers in his hand.

Papa laid the papers on the table and spoke, “I’m heading to the convention today. You remember, don’t you?” Belle nodded. “Now, when you run into town, I just need a new hat. My last one fell apart last night,” he finished.

“Okay, Papa. I’ll be back as soon as possible!” Belle got up, threw her apple core away and was heading out the door before her papa could wave a goodbye. Grabbing the large basket sitting on the stairs, she walked down their pathway lined with wildflowers

Belle hummed to herself as she journeyed to the village not too far from their cottage. She admired the colorful flowers along the pathway, and she smiled as woodland creatures scampered in the underbrush. As she came to the edge of town, she straightened her back and held her head high. She casually walked to the library in the center of the village, ignoring the stares and whispers that followed every time she came to town. By the time she arrived at the library, she heard whispers that called her weird or odd, but she brushed them off. If being normal meant being boring, then normal was overrated in Belle’s mind.

The smell of books and ink greeted her as an old friend when she entered the library and the clerk did the same. “Back already, Belle? I was sure that one would keep you entertained for a good while!” he said with a wide smile. Belle smiled back and said, “I couldn’t put it down! The plot kept me guessing, and I just had to know who put the curse on the castle! And the twist of how the maid was really behind everything—it was phenomenal!” The librarian smiled; Belle’s enthusiasm was really infectious.
“Monsieur Nolan, you wouldn’t happen to have another suggestion for me?” Belle inquired as she walked among the bookshelves, occasionally running a gentle finger down the spine of various books. Nolan looked pensive for a moment or two before turning to the ladder behind him. He pulled it along, nodding to himself, and stopped suddenly. Sprightly he climbed the ladder to the top to grab an ancient looking book with tarnished gold lettering. Just as nimbly, Nolan climbed down and turned to Belle.

“This should be of interest to you, Mademoiselle. It has intrigue, a good plot, and a very surprising ending! I will wager that you shan’t guess the ending until the last few pages,” Monsieur Nolan said as he handed the battered, yet beloved book to Belle. She looked at the worn cover and held the book to her chest. “Thank you, monsieur! I shall bring it back as soon as I am finished! And we shall see who will win this wager!” Belle gave Nolan one more smile before she left the friendly atmosphere of the library.

Belle placed the book in her basket and made her way to the milliner’s shop. It was a quick stop; her papa had placed the order last week when he had to pick up a few items for his newest creation. Belle made her last stop at the baker’s quickly for she wanted to begin her new book! Belle hummed a soft melody as she walked the winding path back home.

Belle sat in the comfy chair that stayed in front of the fireplace year round. Her legs were curled underneath her, as she got lost in the pages of her newest read. She nearly fell onto the floor when her papa touched her shoulder. He gave a robust laugh, “My Belle! I’m sorry to have scared you so! I wanted to let you know that I was about to
leave. I will see you at the end of next week, daughter.” Belle stood to give her father a hug and wished him well. He gave her a fatherly smile and pulled his hat down farther; he nodded once and left shortly after.

Not long after her father had left and she settled down to finish the chapter she was on, a knock sounded from the front door. She huffed and marked her page. She made a face as she set the book down and walked as slowly as she could towards the door. She took a deep breath to steel herself, and jerked the door open. “Oh, great,” Belle thought dryly. Standing on her doorstep was the last person she thought would knock on her door.

“Gaston, what a surprise . . . ,” Belle said dryly. Gaston’s grin missed the mark in trying to be charming. Smarmy was a better-suited adjective. He surreptitiously flexed his chest and arms as he moved to lean on the doorframe. “Belle, you’re looking quite fetching this afternoon!” Gaston exclaimed, attempting to make Belle swoon at his very presence.

“As nice as it is for you to visit, Gaston, I was in the middle of something before you interrupted me. Was there something you needed?” Belle crossed her arms and silently tapped her foot.

“What were you doing? Don’t answer that. I bet I can guess! You were reading a book, weren’t you?” he shook his head. “Why you spend so much time with such trivial activities, I don’t know. But I know something that is more . . . fun.”

Belle arched an eyebrow, not quite liking where this conversation was going. He grinned again and pushed his way in, closing the door once he was out of its way. He
reached into his jacket’s pocket and revealed a small black box. With a flourish, he
opened the box and fell rather gracelessly to one knee. Belle took a small step back.

“Belle! You are the most beautiful damsel in the town, and I am the most
handsome of men! It’s only natural that we marry and have manly sons to carry on my
legacy! I’ll do the hunting, bringing home the meat. You’ll stay at home, cooking,
cleaning, and taking care of the children! Of course, you won’t have much time, if any,
for those books, but I’m sure being married to me is a better hobby. So what do you say,
Belle?” Gaston practically shoved the ring in Belle’s face.

“What can I say, Gaston? This is certainly surprising; I surely wouldn’t have
suspected this offer today or any other day. . . . how can I say anything, but . . . No. As
flattered as I am, I will have to decline such a particularly parochial proposal. I am sure
there are other young women who would simply faint at such a chance to have you.”
Belle gently pushed the boxed ring away from the vicinity of her face. Gaston’s jaw
went slack; he was sure he had misheard something.

“Say that again, Belle. I think I hit my head on my last hunt. I thought I heard you
say no.” Gaston gave his head a shake and looked back up to Belle.

“I did say no, Gaston. I am not looking to marry at the moment. I have too much
to do and see before I think about marriage. But I know there are many pretty girls in
town that would gladly take my place in front of you. Perhaps I can point them out to
you? I’m sure they are of your humble status."

Gaston stood, his movements stiff from kneeling for so long. He was a little
shocked. She had rejected his proposal and him. “No one rejects Gaston,” he thought to
himself. His smile bordered on more of a sneer than an actual smile. Pompously, he
said, "We will see, Belle. You'll be mine one way or another." He spun on his heel, opened the door, and stalked out of the cottage.

Belle sucked in a deep breath and released it slowly. She locked the door and walked to the kitchen to put the kettle on the stove; she was desperately in need of some strong tea. While waiting for the water to boil, she looked longingly out the window next to the back door. She sighed for the umpteenth time, "I want more than a boring, normal life. I want to explore and learn new things . . . ."

The kettle whistled and she poured the boiling water into her mug of peppermint tea. The familiar movement allowed for her mind to wander. When she read a good book, it took her away to far-off lands where women were not confined to the household. Reading allowed Belle to dream of a bigger, more adventurous journey where she could make new friends. She brought the warm mug up to her mouth and blew on it before taking a sip.

She shook her head, trying to clear her mind. "I have an excellent book in the other room and I am in here sulking! Belle, dear girl, buck up! Life will get better than this rustic rut I'm in! Life is what you make it! And if I want it adventurous, then adventurous it shall be! It'll be my time to shine, just like the characters in the books."
During her self-pep talk, she made her way back into the living room to her overstuffed chair. Placing the mug on the nearby table, she curled her legs back under her, opened the book to her marker, and dove back into the world of mystery hidden between the pages.
It was not more than three days later that another ruckus caught Belle’s attention. She was yet again putting the kettle onto the wood fire stove when she heard the whinny of a horse. Belle paused, “Papa couldn’t possibly be back already . . . . Could he?” She wiped her hands on a towel as she walked to the back door. When Belle opened the door, their one and only horse was stomping agitatedly in the yard. Confusion darkened her face.

She rushed out of the house and to the emotionally charged horse. His hooves were creating a big dust cloud every time he jerked. Belle managed to grab onto the reins; she quietly made shushing noises to calm the distraught animal. It took a while, but the horse ceased beating holes into the ground. Belle pet the animal’s forelock. “Where’s papa?” she whispered. The horse neighed and jerked its head towards the forest not too far off. Belle narrowed her eyes and decided to take a chance. She ran into the cottage, grabbed her cloak and was on the horse with no time to spare.

They set a fast pace and stayed that way for a few hours. When the horse slowed, it was within eyesight of an imposing gate. Vines had overtaken the wrought iron bars, but there was a gap in the broken barrier. Belle patted her mount and swung off. She cautiously walked over to the ivy-draped entrance. She didn’t see anyone, so she tiptoed through the gap and slowly walked to the castle sprawled over the grounds. “Why didn’t I know this was here?” Belle contemplated silently, taking in her surroundings.

She ascended the steps, only to find the door partially open. The palace was seemingly abandoned. Dust clung to the walls and drapery. Cobwebs hung from corners and wove through what she could see of the bannisters. Belle’s feet made scuff marks on
the grime-covered floor. She turned sharply, “I thought I heard whispering . . .,” she murmured out loud. There was more mumbling and shuffling.

“Hello? Is anybody there?” Belle called out, slowly spinning in a circle. The whispers grew into an argument.

“We should introduce ourselves! It’s only polite!” a slightly throaty voice argued.

“No, we mustn’t talk to her! We were told not to interact!” This voice was nasally and marginally higher than the other voice.

“Would someone please explain to me what is going on? I just need to find my father!” Belle snapped, mildly agitated at being ignored. She put her hands on her hips and began tapping her toes of her left foot.

“We have to now! She’s tapping her foot! Never ignore a woman who is tapping her foot!” the first voice said. There was shuffling and then two oddly shaped shadows began making their way towards Belle.

A candelabra and a clock waddled to stand at Belle’s feet. The candelabra made a huffing sound and his lit candles burned brighter, illuminating more of the entryway. Belle’s eyes widened and her head tilted in confusion.

“How are you alive? Moving and talking . . . It shouldn’t be possible . . .” Belle clasped her hands behind her back and began walking circles around the odd duo. She noted that there were no wires or puppeteer strings attached to the moving household objects.

The clock, with the nasally voice, bristled. “Would you stop it?! You are making my gears whorl!”
The candelabra chortled and introduced himself, "My name is Lumiere! My tightly wound friend is Cogsworth. We are at your service, ma chérie!"

Belle did the only thing she could, "My name is Belle . . . Might I inquire as to who is the master of this castle?"

Lumiere and Cogsworth exchanged worried glances before Lumiere answered, "Cogsworth shall wait here with you, while I go seek out my master." Lumiere gave a shaky bow and scurried toward a grand staircase that was just in Belle's line of sight.

It was mere minutes before a loud banging sound was heard. Cogsworth worried his stubby arms together while surreptitiously sending glances towards the staircase. Footsteps were heard, getting louder as they grew closer. A large, bulky figure crowded into the entryway.

A voice with a growl-like tone boomed and echoed through the empty air. "Who are you and what do you want?"

Belle stumbled backwards, hitting the door. She stuttered. "I-I just want to find my father!" Her voice squeaked at the end, her nerves getting the best of her.

The giant huffed and asked, "What does your father look like?"

Belle, regaining some lost confidence, said, "He's rather short. Almost bald, but what hair he does have is pure white. He was last wearing a brown wool cloak and a hat to match."

"I see. I believe we have him. Follow me." The hulking, shadow-covered man turned sharply to the left and started down a hidden hallway. Belle looked around for the animated Lumiere and Cogsworth, but they had disappeared. She straightened her posture and followed the echoing steps.
They came to a decrepit door at the end of the long hallway. The beast stopped with his massive hand on the handle. He turned the handle and pushed the door open. The creaking from the hinges sounded like thunder in the silence. Inside a medium sized candle was lit, pouring its meager light on the figure huddled on the cot. A blanket covered the rounded lump, but sparse, spiky hair was visible just above the blanket's edge.

"He was found mostly buried beneath leaves. Our best guess is that something spooked his horse. Now take him and leave!" The last word seemed to echo throughout the whole castle. Belle scrambled to wake her father and get him bundled back into his cloak and hat. She and her father sluggishly made their way back down the hallway and out of the castle.

A few weeks later, Belle was kneading pie dough in their little kitchen. Her papa was dithering away with a new invention, fully healed from his escapades through the woods. Belle's mind drifted back to the beast who had given her back her father without asking anything in return. She looked down as she rolled out the dough, sprinkling flour here and there where needed. She was making this pie as a thank-you to the beast. She placed the rolled piecrust into the pan. She turned to the bowl full of chopped apples and flecks of cinnamon. Belle gave the bowl one more stir before dumping it into the piecrust. Her mind drifted away again as her hands finished the top layer of crust. She put the pie in to bake.

During the waiting time for the pie, she gathered her cloak, gloves, and basket to hold the pie. When the pie was finished, she wrapped it in a thick cloth and placed it in
the basket, covering the basket in another cloth. Belle picked up her cloak and fastened it around her neck. She called out a quick farewell to her father and was out the door. She outfitted their horse and was off-reaching the castle in no time.

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Belle had barely put her knuckles to the door when it was wrenched open. In the doorway stood a fur-covered mass that was haloed only by the light from inside. Belle craned her neck upwards to look the beast in the eye. His fangs protruded from his lips and his blue eyes were nearly electric in color. His demeanor was angry, but Belle plastered a smile on her face and presented him with the basket on her arms.

The beast looked at it skeptically and sniffed once or twice before grabbing the basket enthusiastically. He jerkily pulled the covering back, revealing the baked goods within. His blue eyes flitted back and forth between Belle and the basket. He cleared his throat and took a deep breath.

“This . . . is for us?” the beast asked almost shyly.

Belle nodded in affirmation and said brightly, “Of course! You housed my father while he was incapacitated. This is only a small token of my gratitude.”

Someone made a slight huffing sound and the beast snapped to attention. A teapot bounced its way to the front door. A grandmotherly voice spilled from the object, “Perhaps she would like to enjoy the pie with us, yes?” Belle could only smile and nod to the suggestion.

And thus began a friendship between the Belle of the town and the Beast of the castle.

~
Weeks passed with Belle visiting when she could. She and the beast, whose name was Adam she learned, would spend hours talking about this and that. Adam had even shown her his prized room—the library! The change in the castle was so very gradual and subtle that for months, it went unnoticed. The castle gained life again! The sun streamed in through clean and opened windows. The inch-thick dust that once coated the castle from turret to the rugs was gone.

The change also affected the inhabitants of the castle. Lumiere grew taller with every laugh that echoed down the halls and Cogsworth grew rounder with every time the door opened to reveal Belle. Mrs. Potts, shaped like a teapot, began to blur with every smile exchanged. Every day, Adam grew a little more confident in himself—his posture began to change to match.

One day, the changes could no longer be ignored. The fur that coated Adam’s form began to fall in chunks on the library’s floor. He stared in horror as his arms slowly shifted, becoming more compact and smoothed over with slightly tan skin. Belle covered her mouth with her left hand, while helplessly reaching out her right hand to Adam.

The door burst open to reveal three unknown humans. Adam turned to look at the intruders. His eyes widened in recognition. He gasped, “Lumiere! Cogsworth! Mrs. Potts!” Belle looked more closely at the trio; they did resemble their household counterparts.

All eyes landed on Adam when he released a joyful laugh. The ground around his feet was covered in fur, but the feet were completely human. What was once a beastly form was now that of a human man in his prime. He let loose another laugh just because
he could. He had forgotten how good it was to just enjoy life and he was never going to forget it again.

"Belle! It was you! You helped us be free!" Adams enthusiastically picked her up and spun her around the room.

Laughing she asked, "What do you mean?

"You saw through the curse! You did not let my appearance turn you away! You reminded us how to live and be happy with ourselves!" Adam picked Mrs. Potts up and gave her a spin around the library as well.

"How did I break the spell?" Belle was still confused.

"You were yourself. You kept true to you and only you! You never let anyone change you and, in turn, you helped bring out our human side again!" Lumiere finally found his voice and chimed in.

"Thank you, dear girl! I am indebted to you, Belle!" Cogsworth bowed over her hand and gave it a kiss. Belle just smiled down at the short, balding man.

"I am just happy to have been part of this . . .," Belle said as she watched the newly-freed humans dance and celebrate the breaking of the curse.

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By being true to one’s character, many things can happen—not only to oneself, but to others around as well. Staying true will lead one to happiness and friendship that will last through all the years of one’s life.
Breathing Deep, Facing Fears

The version of Sleeping Beauty known today is a product of many authors taking the foundational idea and tweaking it, as they wanted.

Once upon a time, when magic sparked at the tips of human hands and dragons coveted gold and gems, a princess was born to a kind king and a gentle queen. Called to bless the newly born infant, a fairy of the kingdom prophesied that the little princess would play an important role in the continuation of the kingdom’s peace and happiness. All she had to do was . . . face herself.

A baby’s cry bounced through the airy hallway. The early morning sunlight danced through open windows as a warm breeze fluttered through the curtains playfully. Today the heiress to the royal family had been born! Happiness spread like wildfire across the kingdom. Peasants, earls, lords, and clergymen celebrated the new life as the news traveled. In the princess’s honors, a ball was held and that was when the king and queen decided to reveal her name.

The ball was held a week later, giving the child and mother time to recover. The king presented the tiny princess on a dais. She had honey colored hair, but her eyes had not changed from the baby blue yet. With great pride, the king announced her name: Aurora. They named her so, for she was the light of their lives and the dawn of a new era.

As per custom, various attendees laid gifts of trinkets and blankets by Aurora’s bassinet. Following this, the invited fairies were given the chance to bestow a blessing upon the child. There was only one fairy left when a lashing maelstrom of wind whipped throughout the throne room. The king and queen threw themselves upon the bassinet to protect the child princess; guests darted behind curtains and under tables.
A cold voice echoed through the throne room. "What have we here? A new member to the family? My, how touching! Only... I would think it was touching, if I had been invited..."

In the center of the room shadows coalesced into a tall, thin humanlike shape. The shadows began to melt away to reveal ink colored hair and eyes like sapphires—and just as hard, too—on an almost too-pale face. The woman stood regally, shoulders back and her chin strictly parallel to the floor.

"Maleficent, we were not aware that you were back. Mother had said you were visiting a friend...," the queen spoke as she unsteadily straightened by the cradle. The uninvited woman, Maleficent, sniffed and cocked her nose just a bit higher. Her hand loosened and tightened on her gothic staff repeatedly.

"I see." Maleficent arched an eyebrow. "Could you have not sent a simple message to your dear, older sister?"

"I apologize, Maleficent. I am just now recovered enough to leave the birthing bed" was the queen's reply.

Maleficent gazed upon her sister and murmured, "Indeed." In a slow, steady gait, Maleficent moved toward the dais, intending to look upon her niece. She critically inspected the pale child. She arched her eyebrow again and hummed a low tone under her breath.

"I believe we were—what did you call it? Blessing? Yes, blessing the new princess. I, perhaps, am next, yes?" Maleficent smirked as she gazed at her family. The queen glanced at the king, but nodded. It was better to acquiesce to Maleficent, for the power she wielded was so great.
“Little child, so fair and light. Heed my words, and show no fight. Learn your manners, and keep in mind . . . when all hope seems lost, run and hide.” Maleficent’s voice resonated with power, slithering like a snake into every dark corner of the room. In a burst of shadow, Maleficent disappeared.

The queen picked up Aurora and cradled her to her chest. The king knelt by his wife and daughter, strongly wrapping them in the circle of his arms. Tears began to fall from the queen’s eyes, leaving darkened spots on the child’s blanket.

A voice rang out, “Wait! I have, yet, to have my say! I cannot take it away, but, perhaps, I may be able to lessen the curse.” A woman draped in a blue gauzy fabric stepped onto the dais. Her silvery hair floated around her head as if it were caught in a breeze. Her bare feet did not make a sound as they connected with the floor, and her silver jewelry was just as quiet.

“My name is Meriwether. My talent lies with all things wind. If permitted, I will attempt to help our young princess,” the fairy said, bowing her head in respect.

“If you think you can help, then we gladly accept your efforts,” the king answered. The royal family carefully stood, the queen presenting Meriwether the baby princess.

Meriwether gently touched the child’s forehead, “Little Aurora, clothed with love and cradled with light. Take my words and remember well . . . fear you may know and terror you may feel, but look inside and find what’s missing, find your might.” Her voice was wispy, like a tickling breeze on a spring’s day. She gently caressed Aurora’s brow before gracefully sinking to the floor with weariness. The queen gave her thanks to the fairy for what she had done.
No more than a week later, the king and queen still worried about Maleficent’s curse. They made a very tough decision—they decided to send the princess away to be raised by three fairies, one of which was Meriwether. The other two fairies were sisters and Meriwether’s long time friends. The sisters were near mirror images of each other, save for their opposite coloring. Fauna was dressed in red with dark brown hair and green eyes; her talent let her bond and communicate with any animal. Flora was clothed in green, with dark eyes and red hair; flowers bloomed beneath her feet due to her floral talent.

The king had one more thing to say before the princess was taken away, “Protect her as your own, and on her eighteenth birthday, please bring her home.”

Eighteen long years later, a young maiden sat in a clearing enjoying the company of furry woodland creatures and wild flowers. She giggled at the antics of the baby chipmunks. She stood up and dusted off the skirt of her dress. She petted many of the animals before disappearing into the forest. She followed a winding path that she had long past memorized. It led her to a small cottage covered in lush, green ivy vines and wild roses.

She went inside and was greeted by her three aunts: Meriwether, Flora and Fauna. She gave them a warm smile and greeted them, “Good morning! Did you three rest well?”

Dressed in blue, Meriwether nodded. “I slept quite soundly.”

Fauna, clothed in a simple burgundy dress, said, “I was up with the sun. I, too, took a walk, Briar Rose.”
Pulling a dark green, woolen shawl onto her shoulders, Flora nodded in agreement with Fauna. “A nice walk in the early hours does wonders for a person’s spirit!”

The young maiden, Briar Rose, laughed softly. Her aunts were just as free-spirited as she was. Collectively, they made breakfast and ate the meal sitting at the old wooden table that sat in the corner of the kitchen. Meriwether tensed slightly before speaking, “Briar Rose, we have a surprise for you later. We will be leaving just after midday. Be ready in three hours, dear.”

Briar Rose nodded and helped clean up the dishes. She made her way to her room. She sat on her bed thinking about this surprise. She clasped her hands in her lap. Nervousness was setting in. Trying to shake off the feeling, Briar Rose began setting out her best dress and tidying up her room. She hummed to herself while pacing the room.

It wasn’t too long until it was time to freshen up. The nervous feeling hadn’t abated—it had only grown stronger. Her hands shook as she laced up her dress and the sweat on her palms made it almost impossible to hold onto the lacings. Flustered was how Meriwether found Briar Rose. Quietly, Meriwether took the lacings from Briar Rose’s hands and finished tying up the bodice.

“Everything will be okay, my dear. You will see. Now let us be going. Flora and Fauna are becoming too excited for my liking. They are like two young children . . . .” Meriwether winked and gave Briar Rose a playful smile. They left the bedroom and collected the other two aunts. They were soon on their way—to where, Briar Rose did not know, and for that, she feared.
About half a day’s walk from their cottage sat a large castle made of light colored stone. Briar Rose looked on it in wonder. She had never known that the castle existed; then again, she had never ventured too far from their cottage. The cottage was her home. She obediently followed her aunts to the gate of the castle, and they were let into the courtyard. A page bowed and bade them to follow him. He led them into a large, airy throne room. Opposite from the doorway sat two regal individuals on elegantly elaborate thrones. One was a man and the other was female.

Meriwether stepped forward and curtsied. “Your majesties, I have kept my promise these past eighteen years. I present to you, your daughter, Princess Aurora.”

Briar Rose glanced about, wondering whom her aunt was referencing, but she saw no other people in the large room. She looked back at her aunt Meriwether, who paused in her gesture—pointing at Briar Rose. Briar Rose, now Aurora, raised her eyebrows in surprise and her jaw dropped slightly. She brought her hand up to her mouth, slowly shaking her head in denial.

“Wh-what are you saying, Aunt Meriwether?” Aurora asked shakily. Her voice was two octaves higher than normal, and had none of the steadiness that it usually did.

“Aurora, dear, I am not truly your aunt. Neither are Flora and Fauna. On the day of your presentation ball, your true aunt, who has the gift of magic, placed an unfavorable curse upon you. I had yet to give you my blessing, but I am not as strong as Maleficent, and I could negate only some of the curse’s work. Your mother and father still feared for your safety. It was their plan to have you raised away from the castle with as little danger as possible.” Meriwether clasped her hands in front of her. She looked pleadingly to the girl she had helped raise.
The king and queen stood from their thrones and took cautious steps from the
dais. Aurora, with weary eyes, studied the man and woman. The woman shared her hair
and nose; the man had the same shade of copper-brown eyes that Aurora possessed.
Aurora had always wondered why she did not resemble her aunts in some way, and now,
she knew the answer.

A fortnight had passed, and in those days, Aurora took the time to get to know her
parents—and they her. The family of three spent hours talking—learning Aurora’s first
word, what her favorite food was, and what she enjoyed doing. During the second week,
another ball was in the late planning stages. This ball would be a combination of a
birthday celebration for Aurora’s eighteenth year and a celebration of her returning from
afar.

The day of the ball arrived, and Aurora couldn’t have been more nervous. She
hadn’t had this much contact with people and she didn’t want to embarrass her family.
Aurora sent her maid away after the finishing touches on her appearance and practically
collapsed onto her bed. She thought back to when Meriwether had told her that she had a
surprise for Aurora. Although not true aunts, Meriwether, Flora and Fauna continued to
pop up around the castle. They always seemed to be there when Aurora needed them.

A knock sounded throughout the room. Aurora croaked a faint answer. The door
opened to reveal her mother. The queen gracefully moved to stand in front of Aurora.
The queen smiled gently and held out her hand to the princess. The princess timidly
grasped it and let herself be pulled up. The queen whispered assurances and led Aurora
through the castle to the throne room. Aurora’s mother left her behind a curtain with
instructions to walk out when announced. Breathing deeply, Aurora was presented to the kingdom once more.

Hours into the celebration all seemed to be going well. Presents had been presented and fairies had given their praise as per tradition. No one had noticed the shadows gathering in a far corner, taking the shape of a tall, lithe woman. Her dark blue eyes coldly catalogued everyone in attendance and she quickly calculated her next move. She flicked her fingers toward the dancing candles, causing them to go out. Shadows grew across the room as silence blanketed the room and its inhabitants. Like her shadows, the woman glided across the floor to the center. People gasped as they recognized her features. Maleficent was back, and by the looks of it, she wasn’t very happy.

Maleficent focused on the honey blonde princess standing slightly behind her mother. She arched an eyebrow and caustically addressed the newly returned princess, “My dear niece, you have grown well. But having you here puts a damper on my plans.”

With a sharp wave of her right hand, Maleficent conjured thick, almost oily clouds of darkness. These clouds grew in size and density. The king called out for the castle’s guards, but a tendril of the darkness shot into his mouth. The smog-like clouds began hurting everyone in the room, except for Aurora. In fear, she darted to a balcony door, but it had been sealed by the dark magic as well. She turned her back to the door; her gaze haphazardly roamed the room looking for a way out.

Then Aurora’s eyes stopped on her mother and father. A little farther away, her aunts had collapsed, but were still trying to help with their minor magic. Gradually, their strength left them and they fell unconscious. Aurora looked around to find Maleficent.
Her dark aunt was casually walking through the throng of people piled on the throne room’s floor. Aurora briefly closed her eyes and breathed deep.

Aurora began looking for a way to stop her aunt. Her gaze flickered before landing on a large, ornate ring on Maleficent’s hand. The oily darkness seemed to be resonating from that piece of jewelry. Aurora sucked in another deep breath and began to stumble toward Maleficent. She seemed to surprise Maleficent and Aurora somehow snagged the ring with her own hand. She yanked furiously and managed to pull it off; almost immediately the dark clouds began to disperse.

There were hacking coughs in the background, but Aurora didn’t take time to notice before she was tackled to the ground by her aunt. Maleficent began clawing at Aurora’s hand that held the dark ring, but Aurora wasn’t giving in. She wedged a knee against Maleficent’s abdomen and pushed her back. Aurora quickly pushed herself up and threw the ring to the floor. She crashed her high-heeled foot down onto the jewel. A large crack zigzagged through the stone. Maleficent let loose a sharp shriek and jerkily collapsed to the floor as though all her energy had left her.

Aurora looked on in shock and didn’t move until a gentle hand grabbed her own. She looked over her shoulder into her mother’s eyes. Aurora fell into her mother’s arms and wept in relief. All was well and Maleficent was finished.

Princess Aurora, though frightened, had saved the kingdom that night. She had faced her fears and fought her terror. She had found her courage to do what needed to be done.
Being courageous doesn’t necessarily mean doing the right thing. It means doing what needs to be done even if one is scared. It’s about finding that inner strength to help one carry on.
Fairy Tales as Media

The term “fairy tale” is defined, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, as “a story (as for children) involving fantastic forces and beings (as fairies, wizards, and goblins)” or “a story in which improbable events lead to a happy ending.” Following this logic, many fairy tales come into existence for children, either for entertainment or as a warning to curb misbehavior. Today’s fairy tales are strictly for entertainment purposes, and the most notable fairy tales of today are the Disney films. Films are classified as a type of media, and thus fairy tales have become media, or “a medium of cultivation, conveyance, or expression” (Merriam-Webster).

According to a meta-analysis written Christopher J. Ferguson (2013), a professor of social psychology, the effects of media are “generally minimal and limited to those with preexisting body dissatisfaction.” He also went to say that there is limited support for a “substantial link” between media and eating disorders. However, in a previous research article from the journal Review of General Psychology, Ferguson and two other researchers, Benjamin Winegard and Bo M. Winegard, (2011) focused on how sociocultural aspects impact the “female competition” and how that competition is related to body dissatisfaction. In this article, Ferguson et al. (2011) take into account the social influences, such as peers, and the impact peers have on body image. They supported that social influences are greater in effect than media.

However, I would argue that media impacts social influence, hence this Honors Creative Project. According to the article “The Contribution of Peer and Media Influences to the Development of Body Satisfaction and Self-esteem in Young Girls: A Prospective Study,” Hayley Dohnt and Marika Tiggemann (2006) reported that body dissatisfaction followed low self-esteem. The low self-esteem was triggered by the “perception of peer’s desire for thinness” and television programs that emphasized appearance (Dohnt & Tiggemann, 2006). Dohnt and Tiggemann’s (2006) participants were 97 female children, aged 5 to 8 years old. By the time that children—not just females, but males too—are in kindergarten, they are already having body dissatisfaction and experiencing low self-esteem.

I mentioned in my Author’s Statement that I worked with children in this age range; I got to know them pretty well. To know that they are already dealing with such
issues is hard to comprehend. Even though children this age do not have the mental capacity to name the abstract things as we do, it does not diminish the level of impact or duration of the effects. The media that these children are being exposed to are the Disney films and similar products. This media is affecting their social interactions like the example from my Author's Statement.

Even though there are decades or even centuries between the original fairy tales and their Disney counterparts, the tales have aspects that condone body dissatisfaction or unhealthy relationship images. I do not believe that these messages are intentional, but I do believe they can be toned down or made better. In this project, I attempted to create a more realistic approach to the struggles, but I kept the optimism that Disney is known for. In my fairy tales, there still was that “happy ending” feel, but there was no character changing her body for the prince or a damsel in distress situation.

The purpose of this Honors Creative Project is to give another choice of media for the children—to give them not-so “improbable events” that lead to a happy ending. I wanted to promote good or positive messages for the children to internalize. I do want to emphasize that I am not criticizing parenting styles or implying that I know everything, I just want to alleviate some of the effects that low self-esteem and body dissatisfaction can have on children. In the end, this project is for the benefit of the children I worked with and any child who would read my fairy tales.
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