

4-1-2000

## Reviews

Marvels & Tales Editors

---

### Recommended Citation

Editors, Marvels & Tales. "Reviews." *Marvels & Tales* 14.1 (2000). Web. <<http://digitalcommons.wayne.edu/marvels/vol14/iss1/10>>.

## REVIEWS

---

***Fearless Girls, Wise Women, and Beloved Sisters: Heroines in Folktales from around the World.*** Edited by Kathleen Ragan. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1998. xxvii + 450 pp.

Kathleen Ragan's *Fearless Girls, Wise Women, and Beloved Sisters* is intended as a corrective to previous folktale collections (as well as to the many children's books) which downplay, replace, even erase the roles that women and girls have had or might have in traditional narratives and children's stories. Ragan passionately describes the frustrations she experienced as a mother reading stories about heroes to her daughter, a frustration that resonated with many other women and eventually inspired her to bring together this diverse collection of tales in which women and girls play prominent roles.

Indeed, Ragan has succeeded in correcting the male bias in folktale collections with this anthology of over 100 tales featuring girls and women as the primary characters—the doers, the thinkers, the actors. And while it is by no means the first such collection to do so, it should certainly satisfy a mother's desire for stories featuring female protagonists with whom daughters can identify, stories in which daughters can imagine themselves as more than hapless princesses awaiting rescue. In this sense, *Fearless Girls, Wise Women, and Beloved Sisters* follows in the tradition of Ethel Johnston Phelps' *The Maid of the North: Feminist Folktales from around the World* (1982), Angela Carter's *Old Wives' Fairy Tale Book* (1990), and Suzanne I. Barchers' *Wise Women: Folk and Fairy Tales from around the World* (1990), as well as the more psychoanalytic collections (with accompanying interpretations) like Clarissa Pinkola Estés's *Women Who Run with the Wolves* (1992) and Allan B. Chinen's *Waking the World: Classic Tales of Women and the Heroic Feminine* (1996).

Ragan also follows in some of the more troubling traditions that have characterized folktale collections in the past. To begin with, she organizes the collection by geographical region, beginning with tales from Europe (24), tales

from North and South America—with the sub-categories Native Americans (12) and New World Newcomers (3)—tales from Asia (22), tales from the Pacific (17), tales from Sub-Saharan Africa (15), and tales from North Africa and the Middle East (10). Aside from basic organizational issues such as how Asia and the Pacific are defined (Southeast Asia is grouped with the Pacific and not with Asia), such an organizational structure operates with a rather static understanding of the folktale, an understanding which crystallizes single versions of tales and thus gives the impression of distinct cultural boundaries which are literally mapped onto geographical regions.

This geographical organization and the resulting sense of tales as single renderings contradict tale-type scholarship and the history of narrative studies which stress the movement of tales, their hybridities, and particularly the ways in which cultural contact shapes and reshapes their tellings. Even more, we are left without any context for the tales. Ragan tells us nothing of the narrator, and thus we have no sense of how that individual's personal experiences and personal characteristics influence the way in which the tale is told. Just as Ragan has her own agenda in (re)presenting these tales, so too do the various people who tell them in any given context. What is hidden beneath the geographically driven structure is the understanding that many of these tales are likely told with both male and female protagonists depending on the narrator, the audience, and the narrator's relationship with that particular audience.

While the author and publisher of an anthology intended for a popular audience probably would not want to include multiple versions of the same tale and might find contextual information too cumbersome, something as simple as a thematic, rather than geographic, organization might present a much more nuanced understanding of the experiences of women and girls across different cultures and regions. In addition, the inclusion of Aarne-Thompson numbers would assist readers interested in pursuing other versions of individual tales. Ragan does include numeric references which correspond with the numbers of tales in other collections, but none of them are standard scholarly numbers or collections (e.g., Aarne-Thompson, *Kinder- und Hausmärchen*, Bolte-Polívka, etc.).

With *Fearless Girls, Wise Women, and Brave Sisters* Ragan has created the book she always wanted for her daughter. What I am left wondering is how many parents are purchasing this book for their sons. If the real aim is to correct male bias in folklore and literature, not to mention most societies and cultures around the world, then we have to consider very seriously whether a collection of tales about girls and women is the best (folktale anthology) way of going about it.

Kimberly J. Lau  
University of Utah

*Contes I: Les contes de fées. Contes II: Contes nouveaux ou Les fées à la mode.* By Mme d'Aulnoy. Tricentennial Edition by Jacques Barchilon and Philippe Hourcarde. Paris: Société des Textes Français Modernes, 1997–98.

In our theoretical research as scholars of the fairy tale we often tend to take primary sources for granted, which sometimes prevents us from fully appreciating the important efforts required in establishing, editing, and publishing the original texts. The significance of a scholarly, critical re-edition of a work is all the greater if the narratives date back three hundred years and were written by a woman whose name is now known to only a few. Such is the case of Mme d'Aulnoy's *Contes*, originally published in 1697–98, republished in the 1785 *Cabinet des fées* and re-edited as a Slatkine facsimile in 1975 (*Nouveau cabinet des fées*, with an introductory chapter by Jacques Barchilon).

It has been largely to Jacques Barchilon's credit that the 1975 reprint kept these important tales from falling into oblivion. As one of the foremost French fairy-tale scholars, after over thirty years as a professor of seventeenth-century French literature at the University of Colorado and ten years as editor of *Marvels & Tales*, Barchilon took on, in collaboration with his French colleague Philippe Hourcarde, the first critical edition of Mme d'Aulnoy's *Contes*.

While this new edition was received with great applause at the 1997 Tricentennial Charles Perrault Congress in France, in North America very few are aware of its publication. Yet, this work deserves the attention of scholars and researchers everywhere, for the importance of Mme d'Aulnoy's tales goes far beyond the domain of the French fairy tale. Barchilon and Hourcarde's scholarly efforts allow all of us to rediscover, as it were, one of the seventeenth-century authors who greatly contributed not only to rendering fairy tales fashionable at the time but also to creating the genre of literary fairy tale as such.

In France, and to some extent in North America, Charles Perrault's collection, *Contes de ma mère l'oye*, is still immensely popular and the expression has become synonymous with the French fairy tale. The reputation of Perrault and his *Contes* has obscured the fact that he was but one of over a dozen fairy-tale authors who, as members of elite Parisian *mondain* society and participants in the literary salons, were predominantly women. In fact, two thirds of the 114 tales published during the first wave of the French fairy-tale fashion between 1690 and 1715 were authored by women. The productive social and literary context in which the fairy tales emerged as a literary fashion in late seventeenth-century France has been overshadowed by Perrault's predominance. While many of the tales written by women such as Mme d'Aulnoy, Mlle LHéritier, and Mme d'Auneuil, to mention but a few, were popular throughout the eighteenth century, from the nineteenth century onwards critics, editors, and publishers gave clear priority to Perrault's *Contes*. Ever since, laymen and scholars alike have, for the most part, ignored, if not

devalued, the many fairy tales authored by seventeenth- and eighteenth-century French women.

Perrault's prominent role has resulted in concealing women's preeminent share in creating and developing the genre of literary fairy tale. Just as women writers, such as Mme de Lafayette, began to play an increasingly important part in literary production, female authors fulfilled a vital function promoting the fairy-tale genre. Mme d'Aulnoy, for example, published the first fairy tale in her novel *Histoire d'Hypolite* in 1690. And several other tales written by women appeared before the publication of Perrault's *Contes de ma mère l'oye* in 1697. The women authors of literary fairy tales played a significant role in formalizing the genre, inevitably marginalized by official culture. As a major protagonist in the fairy-tale fashion, Mme d'Aulnoy was one of the first authors to exploit the marginal position of the genre so as to pioneer a type of fairy-tale writing. In so doing, she availed herself of a particular tactic that served to limit the risks she took. She embedded the tales that did not comply with officially approved aesthetic norms within other narratives written in a more classical style. Barchilon and Hourcarde's new publication of Mme d'Aulnoy's *Contes* is the first critical edition to reproduce faithfully the frame stories, which permits reading the tales in their original context.

This 1997–98 edition presents an introduction by Jacques Barchilon, who provides very well-researched information as well as an excellent overview of twentieth-century research on Mme d'Aulnoy's life and work. The two volumes comprising thirty-five tales, superbly edited, appended with a very helpful glossary of seventeenth-century terms, and annotated by Philippe Hourcarde, are an inestimable scholarly reproduction of the seventeenth-century narratives. Reprinted in its entirety, Mme d'Aulnoy's work affords invaluable insight into the ways in which in particular female fairy-tale authors explored the possibilities of the genre.

This new scholarly edition of Mme d'Aulnoy's *Contes* constitutes a delightful reading of tales, many of which are little known today, as well as an invaluable research tool for fairy-tale scholars and literary critics alike. I thus consider it a necessary addition for university libraries worldwide, and it begs for similar critical treatment in English and complete translation into that language.

Harold Neemann  
University of Wyoming

*The Golden Axe and Other Folk Tales of Compassion and Greed.* Retold by Ruth Stotter. California: Stotter Press, 1998. 184 pp.

*The Golden Axe* is a collection of thirty-three tales from within tale type AT 480, "The Kind and Unkind Girls." This tale type, which has hundreds of variations depending on time and place, has at its most basic structure the

rewarding of kindness, the imitation of that kindness by an unkind character, and the punishment of the unkind character. The colorful and varied tales which Stotter has chosen to retell in this book include full-text adaptations from nineteen countries and tale summaries from eight additional countries. In addition to the thirty-three tales in full text are twenty-three tale summaries. Story notes accompany all the tales; each full-text tale is also accompanied by a list of motifs. One will find upon reading that the tale type itself is widely well known, and that Stotter's interpretations are quite refreshing.

This is not your average collection of tales. Stotter, who graduated with an MA in Storytelling and presently chairs the Folk-Narrative Section of the American Folklore Society, has collected and masterfully retold each of these tales with the hope that the reader will pass these stories on to others. Some features of the volume draw special attention: dramatic scripts and games related to the tales, and two appendixes listing foods and animals mentioned in the tales. The two plays, "Mother Holle" and "Strawberries in the Snow," include a list of characters, directions for backdrops and puppet design, list of props, tips on puppet manipulation, and of course, scripts. "The Sparrow's Gift" is also interpreted into a matchbox felt board game, as well as a classroom word game which plays upon the concept of opposites. Also included in *The Golden Axe* is a chart of protagonists found within the tales and a chart of countries from which the tales were collected.

The selection of tales within *The Golden Axe* is truly varied and representative of the wide spectrum of tale type 480. Most people who read the book will find that they are familiar with at least one of the tales, many versions of which, such as "Mother Holle" and "King Frost," have found their way into fairy-tale books. These tales, small adventures with strong moral messages, are retold in such a way as to let the reader's imagination and creative energy take over, and they lend themselves to creating active storytellers out of their readers.

Stotter's retellings of these stories almost beg to be read aloud. The tales themselves prove to transition effortlessly from the written back into the oral. The author's use of dialogue and action, functions which are often lost in more literary retellings of these tales, creates multidimensional and lively stories.

Because it is first and foremost a book for storytellers, Stotter opens *The Golden Axe* with her own tips on oral re-creations of these tales, concentrating on the power of the reader's voice and creativity, not word-for-word memorization or direct reading from the book. In keeping the tales short, the author has allowed for the storyteller's imagination and creativity to provide lavish details and settings. As Stotter mentions in her storytelling tips, the use of dialogue, facial expression, and gestures brings the tales to life and cannot be found by simply reading a tale from a book. The true focus of the book is the art of storytelling.

However, this is not necessarily a book to be enjoyed solely by storytellers. The way in which the tales are set forth is undeniably meant for the reader to adapt and add on to, but the tales will not be any less enjoyable if the reader chooses not to read the tales out loud. Neither should the book itself be approached as a manual for beginners in storytelling, although it could be. In writing this book, the author has successfully harnessed the power of voice and oral traditions.

Faye Stephens  
University of Hawai'i, Mānoa

***Mirror, Mirror on the Wall: Women Writers Explore Their Favorite Fairy Tales.*** Edited by Kate Bernheimer. New York: Anchor Books, 1998. xxiv + 341 pp.

The contributors to this collection of responses to fairy tale by twenty-four women writers were asked to recount how fairy tales had affected their thinking about emotion, the self, gender and culture. It appears that the editor, Kate Bernheimer, also suggested that each writer should retell the tale or tales that, on reflection, she found had most affected her development. Apart from the interest of what each writer has to say about her experience of fairy tale, then, this book also offers a series of vivid and idiosyncratic retellings of a mixture of familiar and unfamiliar fairy stories. And as all the contributors are indeed, as claimed, “accomplished storytellers,” the tales retold, some reflective and thoughtful, some explanatory and interpretive, some iconoclastic, irreverent and funny, become one of the most enjoyable aspects of this book—especially when more than one writer grew up haunted by the same tale. Differing accounts of “The Snow Queen” or “The Girl Who Trod on a Loaf” (Andersen is especially memorable, apparently) provide some illuminating moments of insight into how differently from each other we read and how significantly today’s English-reading cultures diverge. Even within the United States, the contemporary female audience for printed fairy tales is an uncohesive and diverse affair. Conversely, the miraculous toughness and adaptability, the wondrous force for survival of traditional narratives and their mysterious power to continuously compel their own retelling is demonstrated once again to be the miracle of art that it is. As a celebration of fairy tale, this book makes an eloquent statement.

Why particular writers were invited to become contributors sometimes seems a little difficult to account for. Bernheimer’s introduction points to scholarly ambitions for her collection, and I think it would be fair to say that the contributors are a high-powered and rather intellectual set. The popular side of fairy tale has been set aside, and the screenplay or science-fiction writers whom some would regard as today’s recreators of the fairy tale are not among the invited. A number of famous names in fiction are present, though: among them Margaret Atwood is indeed an obvious choice, a writer whose life-long

interest in fairy tale informs her entire oeuvre. Unfortunately, her essay on “Souls as Birds,” though interesting enough, looks pallid in comparison with what she has already published in more creative mode. Joyce Carol Oates has contributed an essay on the fairy tale which I thought a little too obvious for the fairy-tale specialist and a little too dry for the general reader, and her version of “Bluebeard,” stunning as it is, is a truncated version of a tale already published elsewhere. Fay Weldon, although her usual grisly, rewarding, and compulsively readable self, makes one wonder if she is simply taking the opportunity to advertise one of her own earlier books. And A. S. Byatt, apparently included because of her use of Undine in *Possession*, looks, as always, to be more at home with high or elite literature than in fairy tale. Her analysis of images of “Ice, Snow, Glass” is a scholarly high point of the collection but lacks the compulsive interest and emotional force of reflections from other less distinguished, but also less reticent, writers. From the point of view of the literary historian—or just the voyeur—one of the most fascinating pieces in this collection must be Linda Gray Sexton’s account of childhood with her crazy, manic-depressive, suicidal mother, who borrowed her daughter’s much read volume of Grimm and Andersen tales to write *Transformations*, though this is another tale which has already been told elsewhere. Linda Gray Sexton, of course, chooses to write about “The Juniper Tree”—a story where children eventually overcome their destructive evil mother, an interestingly modern story, as the Grimms tell it and as Sexton is aware, for it is the children of this tale who possess the magical, vengeful, power of the fairies to resurrect the dead and punish the guilty.

Although there is no hint that Bernheimer wanted her writers to angle their contributions this way, almost all the writers chose to reflect on childhood and adolescence. Few contributors foreground their adult or professional interest in the fairy tale although for some of them this has evidently been considerable; the assumption that fairy tales are for children, an assumption successfully belied by this book, still seems to rule the collective consciousness. Another common theme is the theme of fairy tales contributing specifically to the development of the writer, whether by providing a role model (Julia Alvarez, growing up in the Dominican Republic, made a personal heroine of Scheherazade) or by providing examples of artful narrative and compelling symbolism through which writers found themselves enabled to interpret their own experience. The collection overwhelmingly gives the impression that reading fairy tales has been a rich and fruitful experience, and a significant shift in female attitudes is registered here, in the way that some familiar “gender” issues are taken for granted, or only lightly touched on, by most contributors. If this collection had been solicited in 1975 it would have looked very different; and so, I suspect, would the selection of tales made by contributors have looked very different. Today it seems that few are repelled by Cinderella or the Sleeping Beauty, and female beauty, passivity,



enclosure, and “waiting” are no longer major issues. Instead encounters with the fairy tale are recorded as reflecting on a variety of experiences: growing up and sexual initiation, of course, but also death and bereavement, emigration, mothering, even being the stepmother oneself. And one final fact for pondering: the tales selected and retold in the collection show absolutely no influence from feminist efforts in the last three decades to widen the canon of popular tales for girls. Tatterhood, Kate Crackernuts, and Molly Whuppie apparently inspired nobody; but there are plenty who still empathize with the sufferings of Bluebeard’s wife, the Little Mermaid, the Match Girl, and the Princess who slept on a pea. Women may no longer see their own passivity reflected in the mirror, but they still, apparently, see plenty of pain.

Rose Lovell-Smith  
University of Auckland

**Grimm Tales.** Adapted by Carol Ann Duffy. Dramatized by Tim Supple. Directed by Mary Hall Surface. With David Baxter, Sarah Ellis, Kathryn Kelley, Dori Legg, Sarah A. Maxwell, Mikael Manoukian, Hugh Nees, Dwayne Nitz, Erika Lynn Rupli, Paul Takacs, Steve Tipton, and Holly Twyford. George Mason University Theater of the First Amendment, Fairfax, Virginia. March–April 1999.

In March and April of 1999, George Mason University’s Theater of the First Amendment and director Mary Hall Surface presented *Grimm Tales*, a production which featured “Hansel and Gretel,” “Ashputtel,” “The Golden Goose,” “Iron Hans,” “The Magic Table, the Gold Donkey, and the Cudgel in the Sack,” and “The Lady and the Lion” (KHM 88). Working from English poet Carol Ann Duffy’s adaptation and Tim Supple’s dramatization of the tales, the performance shows the promise and the pitfalls of transferring folktales to theater.

This production’s visual feast certainly deserves praise. Tony Cisek’s wide semicircular set works through the magic of metonymy to evoke the symbolic landscape as well as story lines of the tales themselves before the play even begins. On the right stands not a castle, but a lone tower. Then, from right to left appear a window-like shield, an arch, a glowing golden sun, a doorway, a curtain, a mirror, and finally a column. Gigantic vines and briars twine over all the set, and hoisted high is a container reminiscent of an oversized bird cage. I found myself considering Rapunzel, Snow White, and Sleeping Beauty as I sat waiting for the lights to dim; the environment felt at once familiar and ever so slightly ominous.

Imaginative transformations bring characters and scenery to life. People stand stock still, then move as a group, as they represent trees in Hansel and Gretel’s forest. A deer runs with such wild grace that one hardly notices the human in tawny clothing beneath the full rack of horns. Other actors stretch

and bend, twisting themselves into the witch's house. In other tales, stuffed dolls stand in for living characters, a white-gloved hand becomes a dove, and moveable toys turn into a golden hen and her chicks.

The creations of costume designer Howard Vincent Kurtz and Masks and Creatures impresario Carmen Parejo add to these sensual treats. Hansel and Gretel's witch wears no mask, but her bushy wig nearly crawls on its own with Spanish moss, birds, butterflies, snakes, and grasshoppers. "Rather than putting the witch in an elaborate mask," Parejo explained to *Washington Post* writer Sarah Kaufman, "the decision was to emphasize the wig so as to make it clear that the cannibalistic sorceress was a continuation of Hansel and Gretel's evil mother—both parts are played by the same actress, Dori Legg" (2 April 1999). Parejo credited children's book illustrator Jane Ray as her inspiration; but, whatever the source, the dragon of "The Lady and the Lion" is a masterpiece. Instead of putting several people together in one outfit, Surface and Parejo created a dragon in three separate sections, each body section played by a different actor. Both playfulness and menace shine through the choreography as the dragon, with its resplendent red wings and its lethally long green tail, morphs into a terrible princess who raises her hand like a claw of a dragon and speaks with a slight hiss.

But when I turn from the visual world of this production to the world of words, my dissatisfaction begins. Narrative experiments enliven the play; some pay off, some don't. The two sisters, wrapped in beggarlike brown, each sitting on a far side of the stage, begin and end "Ashputtel," telling the tale as a retrospective. And it's the lion who relates "The Lady and the Lion." But neither of these inventive points of view truly affect the tale or highlight parts of its story line with provocative shadings. These experiments and even much of the sumptuous visual detail serve to entertain but not to redirect minds; the audience is rarely asked to probe the unsettling issues raised by the tales. As a result, most of the stories seem shrouded in a fog of triviality. For example, so much humor is used throughout the production that when the father in "The Lady and the Lion" announces to this daughter, "I've promised to give you to a savage lion," the audience laughs because it has been trained to laugh rather than to feel the horror, the life-danger of the moment. And details that are ripe for revisioning remain: Hansel and Gretel still go happily offstage, to audience applause, with the man who was twice willing to kill them.

"Ashputtel" was especially disappointing. Here, this tale about a young woman's journey stays tightly wrapped in the patriarchal trappings given to it by the Brothers Grimm. Nothing even begins to shake them loose. Ashputtel speaks no words; all she utters are charms, and those are sung. There's so much humor featured in the stepmother-stepdaughters triad that the complications of the tale, such as the father's quick willingness to help the prince destroy Ashputtel's

dovecote hiding-place, don't come through. One break in the comedy comes in a quick but magnificent move: a look. A very real whiff of malice floats through the set when the first stepdaughter turns and looks at her mother who, butcher knife in hand, tells her to cut off her toe. That look does what a storyteller can do with a well-placed pause; it gets the audience to focus on the action at hand and question it.

"Iron Hans," a tale with many similarities to "Ashputtel," receives the respect that "Ashputtel" is denied. The stature of the young man's journey shines in the battle scene where he rushes in with his drum whose musical force defeats his greater-numbered enemy. This production, however, following the Duffy/Supple adaptation, omits the threefold repetition of the battle scenes that would remind the audience just how much this tale resembles "Ashputtel." Humor overwhelms the female journey, but the male journey to self-knowledge and wholeness receives accolades. The audience must wait until the last tale of the play, "The Lady and the Lion," to see a woman's journey treated with majesty.

In "The Golden Goose," triviality reaches its zenith. The little old man of the forest is played with no hint of magic or power at all. He smiles and laughs; he gives the audience no inkling that Dummling and his two brothers before him have come in contact with an otherworldly force who will change their lives in an instant. "The Golden Goose' is a classic farce," the headnote to the Duffy/Supple adaptation reads, and the editors excise from their version the last half of the tale where the boy, with the help of the little old man, completes the three impossible tasks set for him by the king. The production emphasizes the goofiness of the boy and the outrageousness of the long line of people who have stuck fast to him. The cacophonous procession winds its way throughout the theater audience. For all the riotousness, this production doesn't come close to the power of storyteller Susan Gordon's performance. In her "Dummling," Gordon gives the boy a slight stutter and thus keeps the issue of people's prejudice against those thought to be less able constantly, though lightly, in front of us. She folds in some humor, but leaves us with the tale of an abused boy who grew into a capable young man with the help of a supernatural father, since the human fathers he encountered consistently failed him.

Shakespeare understood the dramatic potential of the folktale, and the opening scene of King Lear stands as an ages-old testimony to that playwright's vision. Hopefully, we will live to see others light up the stage with the folktale's magic and messages. But with this production of *Grimm Tales*, we're not there yet.

Margaret Yocom  
George Mason University

*Ever After*. Directed by Andy Tennant. Twentieth Century Fox, 1998.

*Ever After*, the most recent American popular-culture production of the Cinderella tale, cleverly blurs the boundaries between folktale and legend in an attempt to retrieve the romantic possibility of “true love” for the generation currently being raised in the aftermath/afterglow of second-wave feminist and post-Marxist critique. My review of the movie is in part based on the reactions to it by female members of the generation raised in that aftermath/afterglow (in particular, my thirteen-year-old daughter, Stephanie, and the young women in my undergraduate “Women’s Folklore and Folklife” seminar), and it is in part based on my own interests in revisionist storytelling.

The movie opens in the nineteenth century with the arrival of the Grimm brothers at a magnificent French chateau. Having recently published their collection of folktales, they have been called to court by the chateau’s owner so that she might “set the record straight” concerning the ontological status of the Cinderella figure. This she does by producing two material objects, a shoe and a painting, and by reproducing through narrative (which the core of the movie dramatizes) the inherited family story that is linked to and thus legitimized by the artifacts. The story she tells is set in sixteenth-century France and concerns her great-great-grandmother, Danielle de Barbarac. The narrator begins her story by glancing meaningfully at the Grimm brothers and then at the painting, and saying, “Now, what is that phrase you use? Oh yes, once upon a time there was a young girl who,” parodically invoking the conventions of folktale in order to highlight the tale’s larger framing as legend. Similarly, at the end of the tale per se, Danielle/Cinderella, while playfully chastising the prince, says, “You, sir, are supposed to be charming,” to which he replies, “And we, princess, are supposed to live happily ever after?” When Danielle asks, “Says who?” the prince responds, “You know, I don’t know who,” after which the audience is returned to the film’s larger frame—that set in the nineteenth-century chateau where Danielle’s great-great-grandchild has just finished telling the folktale now resituated as family legend. The matronly lineal descendent of Cinderella then concludes her interview with the Grimm brothers by noting that “while Cinderella and her prince did live happily ever after, the point, gentlemen, is that she lived.” Thus, while, as the Grimm brothers acknowledge in their interview, there “are many versions of the little ash girl” (they mention, in particular, Perrault’s version), thereby seemingly firmly situating the tale within the genre of fairy tale/fiction, the movie works to negotiate a different status for the tale: familial (and by extension cultural) legend/history. Although one might read and dismiss this shift in genre as itself a convention of literature and film, I think the shift in ontological status of the Cinderella figure that accompanies the shift in genre of the tale is significant.

My thirteen-year-old daughter, when asked to talk about the film, explained to me, first, that “there are many different versions of Cinderella,” noting the Disney version and several multicultural versions she had read at school, and then significantly added, “but if a person wants to learn about the real Cinderella, they should see *Ever After*.” Continuing to speak, she fleshed out her definition of “real” by focusing on differences between Disney’s 1949 film version and *Ever After*, noting that the one had “cartoon characters” and the other had “real people,” that the one was set in “once upon a time” while the other was in a “real” place and at a “real” time, and that the one had overly simple characters while the other had more complex people (“the way people really are”). To flesh out what she meant by complex people, she noted that while Danielle/Cinderella was still “nice,” she could also throw an apple at the Prince and hit him with it, that Danielle “punched out” the mean, self-centered, older stepsister (I should note here that my daughter takes karate and that she, too, has an older sister), and that the younger stepsister wasn’t bad, but instead turned out to be really “nice.” Thus, for my daughter (who is the younger of two sisters, who can throw a punch as well as a ball, and who is a girl coming of age in the 1990s), the film presented images she could identify with and validated her construction of self by providing a fictionalized historical precedent for that self. One might argue that the film’s overtly self-conscious resituating of folktale as family legend creates a liminal space for the viewer to construct a play-frame for the self in which, through a series of appropriations, the fairy tale/fiction *cum* family legend/history becomes cultural legend/history and then, in turn, is privatized by the viewer as personal lineage.

Girls older than my daughter (those in high school and the young women in my folklore class) sometimes noted disapprovingly that the point of the film was still focused on Cinderella’s getting the prince, but just as frequently they pointed to Cinderella’s “mastery of language” and “cunning wit,” to the moments of gender reversal in the film, and to the fact that “a pretty, but not ravishingly gorgeous, or unhealthily thin” actress played the part of Cinderella as being positive features of the film. And more than one girl showed up at our local high-school prom that spring wearing wings attached to her prom dress (wings that were quite similar to the wings worn by the film’s Cinderella when she went to the ball), but, significantly, the girls did so having paid for their own prom tickets, having bought their own dinners, and having paid their shares of the price of renting a limousine for the evening.

“To set the record straight” is to call into question and thereby revise a past “record” (in this case, previous Cinderella narratives and the culturally established gender patterns embedded within the narratives, as well as questions of genre). And, indeed, the movie does attempt to respond to the last thirty years of feminist critique of gender construction in respect to key western European,

popularized versions of the fairy tale (in particular those of Perrault, the Grimm brothers, and Disney). Feminist critique has ranged from Rosemary Minard's description of fairy-tale heroines as "insipid beauties waiting passively for Prince Charming" (*Womenfolk and Fairy Tales* [1975]) to the catalog of various traits requisite for being chosen for such connubial bliss: gentility, grace, selflessness (Jane Yolen, "America's Cinderella" [1977]); beautiful, sweet, patient, submissive, an excellent housekeeper (Kay Stone, "The Misuses of Enchantment: Controversies on the Significance of Fairy Tales" [1985]); patience, sacrifice, dependency (Karen Rowe, "Feminism and Fairy Tales" [1996]). The catalog is by now well rehearsed. As one undergraduate female student in my "Women's Folklore and Folklife" course in the spring of 1999 noted, "Little girls that are told again and again of princes who come to save a beautiful but foolish princess may be learning that, in order to get a prince, they must be outwardly rich with beauty, but do not need to possess the common sense that is essential in keeping them from needing to be saved in the first place. The fairy tales of the past are permeated with the ideals of the past, and could be updated in a way that would keep the integrity of the story, while relaying behavior that is now socially acceptable" (Annie Hurst 1999).

The latter is what *Ever After* attempts to do. As a review of the film in *People Magazine* notes,

a clever movie director [decided to] remake the classic *Cinderella* tale [. . . and has] goosed the story by giving it an unmistakably feminist spin. Out went the pumpkin carriage and the white mice who drew it; in came references to public education and rights of servants [lectures actually given to the prince by the Cinderella figure, whose most cherished possession, one might add, is a copy of More's *Utopia*, given to her by her father just before he dies]. He cast Barrymore as the well-read, populist-minded Cinderella, Huston as her supercilious stepmom and Scott, a dashing Scottish-born actor, as the somewhat priggish prince who needs to be taken down a peg or two by Cinderella before he can truly be considered husband material. [. . . The screenplay writers have retained] the bare bones of the *Cinderella* story. The prince, for example, first meets Cinderella while on the run from an arranged marriage to a Spanish princess. The orphaned Cinderella remains with her stepmother because she keeps hoping the woman will actually express maternal feeling for her. And Cinderella's fairy godmother is—hold on to your paintbrush—Leonardo da Vinci, who is hanging about doing some artwork for the prince's father. (Rozen, 10 August 1998: 31)

To *People Magazine's* catalog one might add that not only does this Cinderella use her wit and brawn to save the prince, but she does likewise for herself, when,

towards the end of the story, she is sold off by her stepmother to the local wealthy “scuz-bag” (who is, among other things, old enough to be her father) to use as he sees fit (read potential rape scene here). Whether the filmmakers were consciously doing so or not, they have, through a series of displacements, merged tale type 510A and 510B.

In short, the film plays off of what both folklorists and feminists have asked for: an acknowledgment that there have been many versions of “Cinderella” and that there is a need to return, as it were, to a Cinderella-figure who is, in Yolen’s words, a “shrewd and practical girl persevering and winning a share of the power.” That the film negotiates a shift in vision by means of a shift in genre from folktale to legend is, perhaps, a necessity for a generation that still harbors a desire for “happily ever afters” but who is also the product of a revisionary understanding of what that “happily ever after” might be and how it might be attained.

Cathy Lynn Preston  
University of Colorado, Boulder

***The Marvelous Adventures of Pierre Baptiste, Father and Mother, First and Last.*** By Patricia Eakins. New York: New York University Press, 1999. 249 pp.

The novel is made of entwined stories, of tellings and memories, of heresy and history chambered in the mind of a bookish slave who escapes his bondage in a barrel, is washed up on a desert island, and has his mouth seeded by mermaids with what become his part-fish children, who, when they are grown, help him construct and launch into the sea a stone ark containing his history of the sugar isles which is his autobiography.

Patricia Eakins, author of *The Hungry Girls and Other Stories* (1988), has pulled up from the rich, metamorphosing sea of her imagination a book meticulously figured with human, part-human and supernatural characters. She has tuned her prose to Pierre’s time and he bobbles along in it, weaving the lacey sea-froth around him into portraits of all the landscapes that have bodied him.

Pierre undergoes a series of captivities in his three passages toward becoming both mother and father to his new species progeny. That his mouth is their womb, his tongue their food is logical outcome for him because the language trapped in his mind has not nourished his life except as wishful dreams, has, except in excised fashion, not passed his lips. It has entered him through his ears and eyes and has had no exit until, on his desert island, it finally becomes an act of his hand.

Which is one of the houses he wished for it, as countermand to what his master, an amateur naturalist, has built in his histories and sent to the great Buffon in France. Opposite to his master’s work, which isolated and condemned

to death his specimens so each, without the intrusion of habitat or breath, could be more accurately studied and sketched, Pierre's histories are filled with animated subjects who, whether flesh or spirit or god, intersect and collide and often cause rupture in the fabric of the lives, the relationships, the landscapes inhabiting Pierre's words.

Which are Eakins's, having risen to him from her finny hands as she continually snaps whatever thread of reason he, in his intelligence and pride, desires to shape himself to because it is too small for him, and makes him like the absence he wishes to correct.

Intelligence does not free him from bondage of Dufay's sugar plantation. It makes him changeling. Because of it, he is both functionary participant and observant, future chronicler, the last hidden in the first because it could get him killed if it were known. And not killed all at once. There are inventive tortures with metaphoric names waiting to be meted out to any slave who, even in some tiny way, bends his master's commandments. Pierre, having cut the pages and read the books in his master's untouched library, having a command of Greek and Latin, having gleaned the knowledge that has propelled the whites to their present condition, cannot help but be aghast at their behaviors. Are they not bestial and parasitic? Are not slaves the walls of their mansion, the clothes on their backs, the food on their table? There is much in his master's histories Pierre feels compelled and capable of correcting. And it is his beloved Buffon, the sage of Montbard, he wishes to address, first as correspondent, then, in France, as acknowledged savant, conversing with the great man in his gardens.

Instead, because of his master's second wife's addled addiction to romance and fairy tale—she imagines him beast to her beauty—he finds himself captive in a barrel upon the sea where the dead are given so that they may be cleansed of their bodies.

As is he, for it is not his body his mere-consorts have any need of. They, and the children he gives birth to, have no genitals. It is his mouth they want. As Pierre's tongue shrinks, so do his ambitions for escape and honor. As his mere-children consume his tongue, the island consumes the barrel and the few materials he brought with him from his first captivity.

The children he has are very different from the children he saved himself from having on the sugar plantation by marrying the horribly disfigured and barren cook, Pélérine Verité. Although he is dependent upon and functions as his mere-consorts' breeder, the children born from his mouth are free. Both the land and the sea are home to them. Perhaps in their freedom, Pierre is free.

Pamphile, his master's son, washes up on Pierre's island and tells him that the world he has left has burned down in revolution. Pierre contemplates what could rise from the ashes and with his children's help puts the ark of history and moral fables into the sea, hopeful that it will arrive—intact, and not rotten



or germinated into colonies of various mossy growths born from the sea's juices having infiltrated the ark's body and married the pages within it—into your hands, kind reader, and from there into your marveling eye, which will be captured, as it must be, in Eakins' fabulous cosmogeny.

Morgan Blair

University of Hawai'i, Mānoa

***Little Red Riding Hood in the Red Light District.*** By Manlio Argueta. Translated by Edward Waters Hood. Willimantic, CT: Curbstone Press, 1998. Translator's note + 237 pp.

Jack Zipes (1983) has led us through the “trials and tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood,” illustrating the ways in which the tale of LRRH lends itself particularly well to a broad range of social and political agendas. Manlio Argueta's *Little Red Riding Hood in the Red Light District* (*Caperucita en la Zona Roja* [1977]), set in El Salvador in the mid-1970s, interweaves strands of the fairy tale with other narrative genres and further extends the political utility of the fairy-tale allusion to the Central American novel.

Argueta's novel exemplifies some of the key elements of the Central American postmodern, postcolonial novel, which, in its radically nonnovelistic form, pushes the conventional sense of the modern, western genre. Juxtaposing and jumbling the apparent veracity of personal testimonies (*testimonio*) with the fiction of the fairy tale, Argueta consciously questions the absolute transparency of both in a destabilizing form that shatters linear time, the stability of place, and the singularity of voice.

While “revolving” around the relationship between Hormiga (aka Ant, Little Red Riding Hood) and Alfonso (wolf), there is, paradoxically, no center to the text. The very subject and the narrative voice of the novel are decentered in a constant rearranging of the first, second, and third person, sometimes within a single paragraph. The identities of key characters are similarly unstable: although initially introduced as “the wolf,” Alfonso often denies the association directly (“I'm not a wolf” [9]), and also implicitly through his frequent refusals to eat. Ant, Little Red, on the other hand, assumes the wolf identity: “she throws herself on my lap baring her teeth and threatening me with her hands in the shape of claws, I'm going to eat you up” (16). Argueta explores the central trope of the fairy tale—consuming and devouring—as a metaphor for simultaneously invigorating and destructive love/sex relationships. Ant and Alfonso spend a lot of time in the course of the book eating and being fed both food and each other, and also, of course, in sexual activity, which is never uncoupled from eating (nor is defecation: “Food is shit backwards” [19], Alfonso muses on a number of occasions). The voices and the bodies of Ant and Alfonso thus dissolve into one another as Argueta plays on the

unity and identity of Red Riding Hood and the wolf and their shifting, unstable subjectivities.

The political permeates most Central American novels, and for Argueta the political is always personal. He draws us into the lives of Ant and Alfonso, and allegorically links their dysfunctional love relationship to the pathological El Salvadoran national body, and, by extension, one could surmise that the struggle for a healthy relationship could be the mirrored image of the struggle for a healthy nation. Similarly, the power struggle between Ant and Alfonso, with Ant resisting the inertial weight of Al's machismo, reflects, on a national level, the resistance of the (effeminized) students and intellectuals in the face of the oppressive clout of the US-backed oligarchy.

Incorporation, penetration, embodiment and disembodiment, consumption, and destruction through the literal and symbolic eradication of self serve as powerful metaphors for the repressive regime of the El Salvadoran military oligarchy and their reign of terror against the people of El Salvador which is enacted in the *zona roja* ("the red light district"). In this larger context, the wolves sometimes are the police, as made clear in this remarkable reworking of LRRH that is inserted as a subchapter in "The Wolves": "And her mother told her: 'Watch out for the wolf because if he shows up in the forest he'll eat you up.' But Little Red Riding Hood, who was disobedient, replied: 'If the wolf comes after me I'll eat him up.' [ . . . ] She takes off and on the path she runs into the wolf disguised as a policeman, with his forty-five in hand and if she didn't give him her basket he'd eat her up with bullets" (56). After LRRH stands up to the wolf police and he appears to back down, she continues on her way to her grandmother's. "But the police wolf hid and then he ran off to get that grandmother whore. Now he's knocking at the door of the little old grandmother. 'It's me, Little Red Riding Hood,' with a disguised voice. The grandmother opened the door and the wolf pulled out his forty-five, emptying its magazine: band-bang-bang-bang-bang!" (57). Again, in a later subchapter, LRRH arrives at her grandmother's: "[It's m]e, Grandmother, let me in, I'm freezing,' and the ferocious wolf puts on slippers in order to give himself a grandmotherly air, wrapped up in a Guatemalan made, Lana Turner woolen blanket. 'A tasty morsel I shall eat,' the bandit-faced wolf thinks, fondling the pistol at his waist just as a precaution. 'Coming, my dear.' The bastard" (69). But the wolves are also Alfonso and his *compañeros*, the underground revolutionary student activists who live in the "forest" operating an antigovernment press. It is not without irony that these rebels are aligned with the wolf of the traditional European tale whose villainous (and conservative) prominence seems to have increased as his actual presence was being radically diminished. Similarly, the relatively disempowered El Salvadoran rebels were demonized by the military and the police in order to intentionally confuse citizens and shift attention away

from those responsible for real abuses of power, repression, and violence: “you people say we are murderers, but it’s just the opposite: We’re here to give you anything you want, that’s what the students can’t stand, they just want to fuck everything up: We’re for a revolution with freedom [ . . . ]” (202).

Nominally and structurally, the novel invokes the classic European fairy tale, making it seem familiar to the broader European and North American audiences. This incorporation should not be read as a cynical commoditization of the form (à la Fredric Jameson), however, but should be seen, in the radicalization of the traditional tale within this new context, as an act of resistance—reworking and subverting the tale and thereby offering alternate systems of meaning which require an active engagement on the part of the reader. At the most general level, the allusions to the classic European tale of Little Red Riding Hood throughout the novel serve as a constant reminder of the long-term penetration of European and U.S. influence in El Salvador which has inextricably entangled itself into daily life as it has simultaneously superimposed a military and political presence. More specifically, the tale of LRRH is set up as a foil; the singularity of its story line is juxtaposed with the endless streams of differing and converging smaller narratives—the *testimonios*—to deflate any claims to the possibility of a “grand narrative.” This deconstruction of a single plot or a single point of view reflects the chaos of El Salvador in the late twentieth century, torn apart by military oppression, political instability, economic crisis, and popular revolt. Moreover, events unfold in a cacophony of voices, all intensifying the horrors and anxieties of the time.

Characters in the novel are empowered through voice, not the least the hitherto passive and relatively voiceless character of Little Red Riding Hood herself. Ant as the voice of Woman (here the ultimate “Other”) as well as all the other voices of the individual *testimonios* serve as excursions into alterity, providing the novel with some of its most moving and powerful moments. For readers whose knowledge of the conflicts in El Salvador is limited to short and infrequent news casts (surely the most “official” of “official stories”), these testimonials wrench us out of complacency and throw us into the terror of the street.

*Little Red Riding Hood in the Red Light District* is not an easy read. The rapid non sequiturs in voice, place, and time, coupled with the idiosyncrasies of translated colloquial speech and Argueta’s own penchant for wordplays and puns are sometimes frustrating, and often opaque to the English-speaking reader. Rather than suggesting that the novel is not worth reading, however, this difficulty is an indictment of our own narrowness and ethnocentrism in accepting a generic form as the norm or the standard by which all others are judged—the hegemony of the European novel. This claim is given weight by

the immense popularity of the novel in El Salvador, where it is now in its eighth printing. Stylistics aside, the powerful messages and impassioned voices of the novel are not only abstractly compelling, but shake us into self-reflexivity and into the recognition that ignorance is often complicity.

JoAnn Conrad

University of California, Davis

**Motif-Index of Medieval Spanish Folk Narratives.** By Harriet Goldberg. *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies* 162. Tempe, AZ: *Medieval and Renaissance Texts and Studies*, 1998. xxviii + 288 pp.

Written and oral literature have always been closely connected, especially during the Medieval period, when it is hard, not to say impossible, to separate their boundaries. The methodological advances achieved by folklorists may be of some help when analyzing and classifying texts, as long as these tools are used with the appropriate care. While a number of Hispanic medievalists are not making profitable use of these instruments, the situation has recently begun to change, especially thanks to English-speaking critics (we must not forget the pioneering works of Alan Deyermond). Professor Harriet Goldberg, who has been for a long time interested in the relationship between Hispanic Medieval literature and folk tradition, is the most appropriate person to apply the well-known Stith Thompson motif-index principles and format to Medieval Spanish narratives. She has already demonstrated her command of this methodology in the excellent edition of *Esopete ystorido* (1990), which she published along with Victoria Burrus. The work she now presents is a very useful reference tool which surpasses by far others, such as John Esten Keller's catalogue, *Motif-Index of Spanish Mediaeval Exempla* (1949). The Goldberg study is complemented by the work of Edward J. Neugaard on Catalan narratives (*Motif-Index of Medieval Catalan Folktales* [1994]).

Some of the difficulties Goldberg's task involved are produced by the system's own problems. Many critics have already pointed out the disorder underlying Thompson's apparently rigorous classification, and some of them have even tried to overcome its deficiencies (Anita Guerreau, "Romans de Chrétien de Troyes et contes folkloriques: Rapprochements thématiques et observations du methode," *Romania* 104 [1988]: 1-48; Karin Lichtblau, "Index des motifs narratifs dans la littérature profane allemande des origines à 1400," *Bibliographical Bulletin of International Arthurian Society* 37 [1985]: 312-20). Along similar lines, Goldberg dedicates part of her introduction to methodological problems and goes on to explain the changes she has introduced. What she calls "my specific methodology" basically consists of the addition of new subcategories (P462 Stonecutter, P463 Baker, P464 Shepherd, P465

Lawyer, P466 Doctors, W46 Compassion, W159 Arrogance) and new motifs (identified, as has become customary by an asterisk), and on the correction of some descriptions, adding or eliminating details, depending on what works according to the materials at hand. The book turns out to be very easy to handle thanks to the corrections I just mentioned and the alphabetical index inserted at the end of the text, which is by the way very accurate. The entries are cross-indexed with Frederic Tubach's *Index Exemplorum: A Handbook of Medieval Religious Tales* (1969), which is useful, although correspondences with Aarne-Thompson tale-type index could have also been added. Anita Guerreau-Jalabert's choice to compile a list of references by title at the end of her *Index des motifs dans les romans arthuriens français en vers: XIIIe–XIIIe siècles* (1992) is extremely useful here too, though it has the inconvenience of increasing the volume's number of pages far too much.

Most of the works considered by Goldberg are in Spanish, although Alfonso X's *Cantigas de Santa María*, written in Galician-Portuguese, and the *Disciplina clericalis*, a collection of tales originally written in Latin, are also included. The complete works studied in this book embrace a wide historical period, from the twelfth to the fifteenth century; they are written both in verse and prose, and range in genre from the epic and the chronicles to the tale and miracle collections as well as novelistic prose-fiction. Future revisions may continue to add to the catalogue since works such as this one can never be considered complete. The author may then include other accessible texts, well known by her, where folk motifs are also found, such as the *Libro de los buenos proverbios*, Diego Cañizares's *Novella*, the *Victorial* by Gutierre Díaz de Games, or Lope García de Salazar's *Libro de las bienandanzas e fortunas*. The *Poema de Fernán González*, one of the Medieval texts more clearly structured on a folkloric type, as critics have repeatedly pointed out (Beverly Sue West, *Epic, Folk and Christian Traditions in the Poema de Fernán González* [1983]), or the *Amadís de Gaula* will no doubt provide additional materials. Other texts instead, such as the romances, the works of Alfonso X, or Valerio Máximo's *Hechos y dichos* will have to be studied in independent catalogues, due to their considerable extension and complexity.

These remarks must not be read as criticism of the author's excellent work, nor make us forget that Harriet Goldberg analyzes more than forty different texts, which is, as I mentioned earlier, a wider and superior range than J. Kellers's. The four thousand and some motifs identified by the author also show us how closely related Spanish Medieval literature and folk narratives are.

María Jesús Lacarra  
Universidad de Zaragoza

*Fremdheitserfahrungen am Tisch des europäischen Märchens: Ein Beitrag zur Kulturthemenforschung interkultureller Germanistik.* By Tanja Kodisch. *Deutsche Sprache und Literatur 1622.* Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 1997.

Scholars of the fairy tale since Wilhelm Grimm have emphasized similarities within the corpus of Europe's fairy tales, and the recent Europe-unifying Treaty of Maastricht powerfully promotes modern-day impetus for similar internationalist sentiments. In particular, Europe's new internationalism is likely to generate many explorations of national cultures in terms of historical commonalities and singularities, as well as sharp sensations of recognizing the familiar and experiencing the alien. This dissertation builds on explorations of the concept of "die Fremde" by Alois Wierlacher, Tanja Kodisch's *Doktorvater*, to explore that category in fairy tales which are linguistically foreign to Germany's own (principally from the Grimms) tradition. Kodisch chose fairy tales that thematize alienness in connection with food culture, a context in which she finds pan-European qualities.

A common structural characteristic in almost all European fairy tales is the hero's travels into and experiences within foreign lands; in Kodisch's view a hero's experiences are closely bound up with and are particularized in conjunction with meals and eating. Kodisch's thorough examination of Italian, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Netherlandish, and Grimm (sic) fairy tales from the Diederichs collection *Märchen der Weltliteratur* persuades her that eating and hunger mark twin poles of cultural identity and alienation ("Entfremdung").

It is true that studies of individual tales and tale types demonstrate the existence of strong supranational structural similarities, as Kodisch affirms in her own study, but they usually aim at identifying the existence of differing national or regional oicotypes. Kodisch's examination of food culture necessarily covers predictable subjects (culture-specific foods, the household hearth as central to family identity, meals as a significant locus of communication), but she reaches some refreshingly unexpected conclusions. For example, in her characterization of cannibals as an integral part of a devouring hierarchy, she observes that in European fairy tales it is more often nobles who eat their social inferiors than witches in the woods who gobble up the young or unwary.

The disciplinary context for this study's European focus is intercultural Germanics. In an ambitious conclusion, Kodisch suggests that her results are applicable to a Europe that is itself striving to achieve common goals, a desirable, but perhaps overly optimistic conclusion.

Ruth B. Bottigheimer

State University of New York, Stony Brook

***Grimms Märchen und ihre Quellen: Die literarischen Vorlagen der Grimmschen Märchen synoptisch vorgestellt und kommentiert.*** Edited by Heinz Rölleke. Schriftenreihe Literaturwissenschaft 35. Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag, 1998. 591 pp.

In a series of editions and other publications spanning the past quarter-century Heinz Rölleke has provided scholars with ready access to materials and information essential to serious study of the Grimm fairy tales. This latest effort is a singularly important continuation of those achievements. Professor Rölleke has put us now in a position to compare with ease the ultimate versions of the sixty-three stories in the edition of 1857—the seventh and last during the Grimms' lifetime—that were taken from written sources with the texts presumably used by the Grimms. Such comparison, since it cannot be undertaken in the case of the more than twice as many tales from oral sources, is indispensable for arriving at some understanding of how Jacob and—in the main—Wilhelm Grimm reshaped or altered stories for inclusion in the collection. As Rölleke acknowledges in his brief preface, the comparison of the Grimm versions with their “literary” sources was first undertaken to any considerable extent by Hermann Hamann (1906); but the subject has since been rather much neglected, a neglect that with this edition Rölleke hopes to help remedy.

Unlike Hamann's book, Rölleke's is an edition, not a critical study. In his preface and his notes to the individual tales, therefore, Rölleke refrains largely from evaluative commentary and excludes interpretive remarks entirely. One finds in the notes, however, a number of useful and telling observations of general import, such as that personal names and place names were omitted to achieve a higher degree of typicality (559–60), that statements of the lesson to be learned from a tale were omitted (565, 576, 578, but 579), that “wise woman” was used in place of “fairy” (580), that expressions or sayings were added (558, 582).

While in the stricter sense Rölleke keeps his promise, made in the preface (9), to refrain from interpretation entirely, in a broader way he does prejudice matters at times, especially when it comes to erotic elements in the tales, such as those in the Rapunzel story that he implies (552) the Grimms dropped for reasons of narrative economy. Similarly, Rölleke remarks (571) that “almost the whole first half” of the story of Snow White and Rose Red (KHM 161) is used for describing “the virtuous life” of the two daughters and their widowed mother, thereby failing to mention that that first half culminates in depiction of the frolicsome flirtation with the girls by the prince thinly disguised as a bear, who jestingly cautions them not to be so rough in their play with him lest they knock their suitor dead (“schlägst dir den Freier tot,” 277). Rölleke having been, in an earlier essay, responsible for clarifying Wilhelm Grimm's role

in creating that part of the story, one wonders why he is less than candid here about the prince's romantic attraction to the girls. Regarding the story "The Glass Coffin" (KHM 163), Rölleke does point out that Wilhelm Grimm omitted the "references to the princess's nakedness" (572), but he fails to bring to our attention that the depiction of attendant erotic excitement engendered in her rescuer by her nakedness, together with the erotic suggestiveness of her story to him about how she came to be lying naked in the glass coffin, was likewise removed.

The easy comparison of the Grimms' ultimate versions with the texts they originally had before them yields fascinating contrasts, even though as Rölleke observes (8) the Grimms followed their published sources rather faithfully, certainly more so than they did their oral sources. One finds for instance (14) that the sorceress in the Rapunzel story is described in the source as completely devoted to her garden, thereby prefiguring the jealous devotion that she shows in both versions toward the girl whom she gains in exchange for salad leaves from that garden. In the Grimms' source, too, we are told of Rapunzel's innocent erotic excitement on first catching sight of the handsome young man who becomes her lover (20). In the text that Rölleke adduces as the source for the pious tale about the money falling from the sky (KHM 153), the story is told in the first person, to whom, as a child alone in the forest, the Holy Mother appeared, introduced her Heavenly Son, and spoke to the child about the Holy Ghost (249–50). And at the end of the comic tale about the boots made of buffalo leather (KHM 199), in the text that the Grimms presumably had before them the king joyfully embraces the poor soldier, the wearer of the boots referred to in the Grimms' title, and says that the soldier should never leave him, whereas in the Grimm version the king merely promises to see that the soldier shall never be in need and invites him to come visit the royal kitchen whenever he wants to eat a good piece of roast (544–45). The Grimms' evident concern here not to seem wanting in according respect to monarchical dignity is reflected, too, in the change of reference in the story's title from the king's waxed boots, the object of the soldier's teasing, to the boots worn by the soldier himself.

James M. McGlathery

University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

***Scheherazade's Sisters: Trickster Heroines and Their Stories in World Literature.*** By Marilyn Jurich. *Contributions in Women's Studies* 167. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press. xviii + 292 pp.

Marilyn Jurich is an associate professor of English at Suffolk University where she teaches a diverse complement of courses ranging from fantasy and folklore to modern British poetry. Her broad interests served her well in compiling the materials for this work which draws from published narrative



collections from around the world (and also in suggesting to the reader ever so often to expand beyond this compilation to consider the Bible, Shakespeare, opera, or other dramatic forms). Her dramaturgic inclinations—she has written children's plays—pattern the ways in which she renarrates a great many folktales in six chapters and a brief introduction. The latter serves to explain the title of the work: Jurich retells the plight and resourcefulness of Scheherazade, making her the exemplar of what she terms “trickstars”—her coinage for female tricksters or “‘stars’ in trickery” (xiii). The goal of the work is to establish the female trickster as an archetype within global folk narrative, whereby the extent to which Jurich means to build on Jungian narrative analysis is unclear. Marie-Louise von Franz, Jung's major proponent in particular with regard to gender and narrative, is for instance not part of the discussion here; nor is there mention of Max Lüthi or Marta Weigle whose work, from very different angles indeed, would nonetheless have usefully contributed to this project.

The book's chapters proceed thematically, starting with “Mean and Meaningful Tricks,” a chapter that seeks to characterize the fundamental traits of the woman trickster—who is “hopeful, pragmatic, convinced that she can turn a situation around, and she seeks to amuse” (23). Here, as in the other chapters, Jurich offers a mixture of retellings and intelligent, if oddly marginal commentary on scholarship. Most of her interaction with relevant scholarly literature is relegated to footnotes, but occasionally she will single out an author to point out loopholes she has identified in theory or method. The second chapter, “Folktale Females in Patriarchal Systems,” stresses the mythological woman trickster, and folktale is used here as a term encompassing other narrative genres such as myth and legend. “The Rescuer,” “The Pursuer,” and “The Empowered” are each the subject of further chapters. The final chapter seeks to compare male and female tricksters, and this chapter also offers, unfortunately rather late in the work, a list of the questions informing the overall study. Jurich looked for four issues overall. Does the trick provide humor or diversion and create positive feeling? Does the trick narrate negative circumstances, showing depravity? Is it the strategy rather than the meaning that is to be admired? Does the trick bring value? Based on these questions, she draws up a typology of tricks, and the chapter's goal is to elaborate to what extent male and female tricksters might differ. Furthermore, she hopes to extrapolate from this analysis, what the female trickster's importance might be to our understanding of folklore as well as to our awareness of women.

For scholars versed in folk-narrative scholarship, the work holds a number of frustrations. Though she is clearly familiar both with the Aarne-Thompson index and Thompson's motif-index, Jurich has chosen to create her own systematization of motifs in an appended “Overview of Tales.” Here, the narratives are listed as retold in every chapter, using a mix of author-source, country or

ethnic designations to label them. With each tale there is a listing of thematic elements and if applicable, specific tricks—and naturally some folklorists would like to see motif numbers here, instead of or in addition to Jurich's verbal descriptions. Without the numbers, it is unclear what purpose is to be served by this overview: are others invited to build on this typology? Or is it simply a reference tool allowing one to use Jurich's book more as a compendium of tales than a study? (One wonders whether the publisher had a hand in this matter, just as the subtitle hints toward audience and sales concern over accuracy: it is folk or vernacular narrative that forms the bulk of data in this work, not the subtitle's "world literature," which figures only in the form of Shakespeare and the Bible.) Similarly, the brief typology of tricks laid out in chapter six hints toward a more Proppian recognition of formal possibilities inherent in trickery, yet Propp's ideas are not part of the study.

The work's introduction does not disclose a great deal about the genesis of this study, and hence there is also no accounting of what selection criteria Jurich has used in bringing together these materials. Without faulting the author for it, readers should be advised that Jurich does not consider performance issues, nor does she seek to determine who the tellers of her texts were—although a number of her source texts disclose such information. She occasionally assumes that a given tale must surely have been told by a man, "no doubt, to other males" (8), but there is no attempt made to figure such issues into her analysis which rests on the texts and more generalized assumptions about universally valid gender domains in religious and interpersonal terms.

Readers familiar with Jo Radner and Susan Lanser's essay on coding in Radner's *Feminist Messages* (1993) will discover how nicely female tricksters' doings demonstrate coding strategies, from distraction (23) to concealing (53). Similarly, the work can surely be mined for the considerable number of tales that have been brought together here.

Regina Bendix  
University of Pennsylvania

***Madcaps, Screwballs, and Con Women: The Female Trickster in American Culture.*** By Lori Landay. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1998. xi + 258 pp.

*Madcaps, Screwballs, and Con Women* draws on literature, film, television, advertising, and other popular discourse to remedy the academic neglect of the female trickster figure. While ambitious and complex, Landay's study contributes to a greater understanding of how the female trickster figure in American culture, in conjunction with trickery, has existed quite openly but has also been ignored, marginalized, manipulated, and criticized by dominant culture for crossing social boundaries.

Functioning as a subversive act, humor is one characteristic of the female trickster figure. As with studies of women's humor, to identify the female trickster Landay claims one must look "from the margins of dominant society to the centers of women's space—the parlors, kitchens, and bedrooms of domesticity" (3). While often operating from a different venue, female tricksters exhibit traits similar to those of mythic male tricksters—such as liminality, ambiguity, lewdness, deceit, shapeshifting—and become messengers to a larger audience. But they also use covert and/or overt strategies to temporarily subvert or ridicule a social structure, often using trickery as a means to an end.

In general, the historical and literary focus of *Madcaps* is between 1850 and the present. In the introduction, Landay discusses the trickster figures of Scheherazade and Catwoman. Male violence towards women connects these characters. Covertly, Scheherazade utilizes female power with her extraordinary storytelling ability and sexual expertise to manipulate the King into more appropriate behavior toward women. Scheherazade does not challenge cultural boundaries. In fact, she remains within her sphere of influence, the domestic. Catwoman represents the other side of the trickster spectrum. She uses both covert and overt strategies in order to transcend and transform male culture. A shy, not particularly sexual woman, Selina is killed by her violent employer. Transformed into Catwoman, she hurls jokes at male dominant culture and begins to actively engage in the world. Catwoman uses "supernatural and superhuman forces, especially her use of the cat as a totem animal which aligns her with such figures as the Native American Coyote and the African American Signifying Monkey" (3). Unlike Scheherazade, she rejects marriage and the domestic.

In chapter one, Landay examines three trickster figures in nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century American women's fiction, "the madcap, con woman and screwball heroine, respectively" because they "employ the trickster tactics of deception, impersonation, theft, duplicity, and subversion in their attempts to secure autonomy and to rebel against the cultural dictates that limit women's place to the home and women's power to influencing others" (34). In chapter two, Landay focuses on the images of the female trickster as they moved from print to film. Female trickery became a cultural necessity as notions of femininity emerged from and were shaped by consumer culture, and became a "social practice" in the twenties as a way to escape the confines of traditional notions of gender. She states, "the female trickster, therefore, can be seen as an articulation of the contradictory position in which women were placed by the processes of modernity" (92).

In Anita Loos's *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* Lorelei Lee is considered a female trickster who records her "tricks" in a diary. While she is a sexual character, this sexuality is only alluded to. Not only does she understand the importance of her

appearance but she knows the tricks she needs to employ to achieve material rewards. Lorelei “educates” her victims. She is a con woman and manages to create her ultrafemale personality according to what she desires. This chapter also discusses the image of the blonde in popular culture which has shifted from notions of goodness to images of the dim-witted gold digger.

Chapter three covers the transition of the female trickster from radio to the screwball comedy as well as the effects of media and social stereotypes on women. Here Landay focuses on Mae West as a trickster actress who not only utilized male-dominated notions of beauty and sexuality in regards to makeup, costume, and language, but also rejected conventional domesticity. Landay says, “West deliberately constructed a public persona that transgressed cultural definitions of gender and sexuality” (99). West exploited language cleverly using double entendre and sexual innuendo as a source of power in order to critique hypocritical censors.

From the thirties to the forties, screwball comedies favored “unconventional female behavior as a strategy for fighting the battle of the sexes” (104). And yet Landay claims, “screwball comedies were part of an ideological shift in representations of women as equal partners that was not accompanied or caused by a similar shift in the position of women as a group in American society” (144). Female tricksters used covert power to manipulate men, which worked “as long as women [were] relegated to the private sphere and limited by the dictates of femininity” (146).

In chapter four, Landay discusses constructions of femininity and female trickery in the 1940s and 1950s. Here Landay focuses on Lorelei Lee in the film version of *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* and Lucy Ricardo in *I Love Lucy*. Marilyn Monroe portrays a changed Lorelei Lee, whose “trickery is restricted to the kinds encouraged by postwar culture as the social practices of femininity in everyday life—makeup, influence over men through the tactics of covert power, manipulation of sexual attractiveness as a survival skill” (158). Instead, Dorothy, a subordinate character in the text, becomes the female trickster who understands and controls her effect on men and who uses her power covertly and overtly. The film ends with a double marriage for Lorelei and Dorothy.

In *I Love Lucy*, the episodes usually begin with Lucy’s unfulfilled desire, such as having her own money, her own job, a higher social status, or an acting career. Her husband Ricky usually says no to her wishes so Lucy has to utilize her covert trickery to achieve her goals. In her escapades, “Lucy employs an impressive array of female trickster tactics—disguise, impersonation, theft, deception, duplicity, and subversion—in her weekly rejection of the confines of domesticity and the limitations of conventional femininity” (160). Sometimes these tricks work and sometimes they don’t, suggesting how the series expressed

an ambivalence towards female trickery which in turn reflects the “cultural anxieties about women’s place and women’s power in the cold war era” (161).

Lastly, chapter five draws on the image of the female trickster as it has changed with the feminist movement. With the new wave of feminism, there is an insistence on overt female power rather than covert. Old tricks such as “extending existing stereotypes of femininity, like Loos’ critique of the ‘love economy,’ and the social practices of female trickery, like impersonating the little woman fail to challenge the structure, institution and ideology of the sexist limitations that originally promoted the tricks” (201). While Landay states that feminism and female trickery have “at best an uneasy relationship,” often, in film and television, female success is related in terms of mass consumer culture. One of the significant changes of the female trickster image in the late twentieth century is that her relationships with other women are explored as much or more than her romances. Feminist female tricksters articulate “the possibilities of becoming creative non victims” (218).

The range of work on popular and mass culture is tremendous and often complicated. When you mix issues of feminism, constructions of femininity, women’s humor, popular culture, and Western and Native American myth into the fray, a work can become incredibly tangled. At times, Landay’s book is too much of a good thing. While stimulating, some chapters could have functioned as entire studies because of the complexity of the images, texts, and examples which are analyzed. But as is the case with all work surrounding women’s cultural position, one has to draw upon a variety of sources in order to clarify how gender, culture, ideologies, and societies form a complex whole. *Madcaps* presents a remarkable and intriguing account of how “female tricksters—whether madcap, screwball, con woman, or Catwoman—perform a part of the cultural work of transforming the feminine into the human” (218).

Kristin M. McAndrews  
University of Hawai‘i, Mānoa

***Happily Ever After: Fairy Tales, Children, and the Culture Industry.*** By Jack Zipes. New York: Routledge, 1997. 171 pp.

A specter is haunting this collection—the specter of Walt Disney.

Perhaps the most well-known Marxist critic of folk and fairy tales, Jack Zipes has written some of the best critical analysis on the socializing influences found in the transformation of oral folktales to literary fairy tales. As the subtitle of this volume suggests, he examines the next step when print versions of fairy tales are adapted into film, television, and video, the major means of transmission in the second half of the twentieth century. Zipes argues that by the 1930s, through the use of radio and film, fairy tales had been successfully segmented into those intended for adults and those for children and that by

the end of the century, the fairy-tale film had become the predominant literary genre for preadolescent, middle-class children. Much of this is the result of Walt Disney, who successfully commodified the fairy-tale film as wholesome family fare and in doing so reinforced patriarchal and consumer tendencies of the culture industry.

In a series of six loosely connected essays, this volume studies what happens to the fairy tale once the individual storyteller is replaced by a corporation. Despite the book's optimistic title and his championing of Walter Benjamin's concept of the storyteller in his final essay, Zipes's tale does not have a happy ending. This book makes an excellent companion to Henry Giroux's *The Mouse that Roared: Disney and the End of Innocence* (1999), although Giroux's focus is more concerned with the commercialization of childhood at the hands of Disney films and products, while Zipes is more interested in the process in which storytelling is devalued by a culture industry whose chief concerns are economic profit and advancing its own production technology rather than the tale or the tale's effect on the child audience.

Although they have been previously published elsewhere, the two essays "Toward a Theory of the Fairy-Tale Film: The Case of *Pinocchio*" and "Once Upon a Time Beyond Disney: Contemporary Fairy-Tale Films for Children" benefit from being brought together in this volume and function as a unit in that the first essay outlines and critiques the standards for feature-length fairy-tale film that Disney has established for world cinema, while the second essay examines fairy-tale films produced by other directors which provide an alternative to Disney and emphasize what Disney films lack. Together these two essays are the most valuable of the collection and form the intellectual core of the book.

Zipes argues that Disney's films have revolutionized the fairy-tale genre in cinema in the twentieth century with the same degree of that the Brothers Grimms' collecting and editing of fairy tales did in the nineteenth century. Rather than focusing on Disney's breakthrough feature-length fairy-tale film *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937), Zipes chooses to investigate *Pinocchio* (1940), which he reads as far more autobiographical as well as pivotal in the major changes of content of the fairy tale in the transformation from print to film. Zipes suggests that the relationship between Geppetto and Pinocchio hints at the relationship that Walt Disney lacked with his own father.

Once a fairy tale is adapted into film, image dominates the text, and the personal and communal voice of the oral fairy tales is silenced. Essential to Disney's transformation is that the major protagonist is no longer the character, but the director who becomes the "magician behind the scenes" (69), which further distances the storyteller from the audience. Using the latest film technology, Disney was able to dominate the fairy-tale film market to such an extent that his name became a brandname and shorthand for fairy-tale films.

Under Disney's guidance, the fairy tale is reshaped to suit the format of the musical and the adventure tale. The Hollywood musical, with its catchy lyrics and songs, became the model. Disney provided clear-cut gender roles for women (domesticity) and men (action and power). Heterosexuality and marriage became the goals of the story, and the heroine had to be rescued by the prince. In Disney's films the fairy tale becomes standardized and mass produced, paralleling the production of Henry Ford's automobiles. Zipes cites a wonderful passage from a 1934 *Fortune* magazine that maintains, "In Disney's studio a twentieth-century miracle is achieved: by a system as truly of the machine age as Henry Ford's plant at Dearborn, true art is produced" (92). Yet in using this structural rigidity, the basic plot of a Disney fairy-tale film remains the same, which encouraged the development of secondary characters and increased the amount of their slapstick humor. Nevertheless the fairy-tale film under Disney production methods became increasingly formulaic, or as Zipes suggests, synonymous with Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of "the eternal return of the *same*" (92).

An alternative to the Disney fairy-tale model are those films produced by directors such as Shelley Duvall, Tom Davenport, and Jim Henson, which Zipes sees as attempts to challenge child viewers to think for themselves. Zipes particularly praises Henson's series *The Storyteller*, which featured Muppet characters interpreting nine Grimm fairy tales and utilized John Hurt as the storyteller who told the stories rather than simply having them acted out. Duvall's *Faerie Tale Theatre* comes off less successful in Zipes's evaluation in that the series featured well-established actors and directors whose performances frequently overpowered the fairy tales. Zipes particularly dislikes the productions of *Red Riding Hood* and *Beauty and the Beast* produced by Roger Vadim, although he praises *The Frog Prince*, which was directed by Eric Idle and featured Robin Williams and Terri Garr. Zipes also praises Tom Davenport's innovative adaptations of Grimms' fairy tales into films set in Appalachian landscapes, beginning with *Hansel and Gretel* (1975). While none of these filmmakers has been able to break the domination of Disney on the fairy-tale film market, they have all shown it is possible to create film versions that move beyond Disney's notions of patriarchy and racism.

The collection concludes with Zipes's meditation on a Walter Benjamin essay. Zipes prefers Benjamin's ultimately more optimistic attitude toward the culture industry than Theodor Adorno's grim belief in the capitalist commodification of art and leisure. Rather than examining Disney's fairy-tale films in light of Benjamin's often cited "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Zipes chooses to use the less familiar essay on "The Storyteller." Benjamin considered the folktale to be the highest narrative form, in contrast to myth, which he associated with obfuscations and deception. For Benjamin

and Zipes, the “great storyteller will always be rooted in the people” (134) and essential to genuine storytelling is the dialogue or exchange of ideas between the teller and the audience. Regretfully in Disney fairy-tale films, this exchange of ideas has been replaced by a monetary exchange for profit. Yet genuine storytellers such as Henson, Duvall, and Davenport still exist and provide viewers with the true nature of storytelling.

The three other essays deal with versions of “Puss in Boots,” “Hansel and Gretel,” and Disney’s *The Lion King*, but are much less compelling than the other half of the collection that deals specifically with fairy-tale film. Zipes’s use of Benjamin’s distinctions between authentic and artificial storytelling allows him to make a valuable critique Disney’s fairy-tale films, making this collection a significant contribution to contemporary fairy-tale studies.

Jan Susina

Illinois State University

***No Go the Bogeyman: Scaring, Lulling, and Making Mock.*** By Marina Warner. New York: Farrar Straus and Giroux, 1998. xii + 435 pp.

In book 5 of *The Prelude*, Wordsworth remembers a childhood encounter with death; he describes “a heap of garments, as if left by one / Who might have there been bathing” (ll. 437–38), which prompts the dragging of the lake the following day with the result, “mid that beauteous scene / Of trees and hills and water” (ll. 448–49) that the drowned suicide “bolt upright / Rose, with his ghastly face, a spectre shape / Of terror” (ll. 449–51). The narrator assures us that his “half-infant thoughts” are not to be sullied by “soul-debasing fear,” because

[ . . . ] My inner eye had seen  
Such sights before, among the shining streams  
Of faery land, the forest of romance.  
Their spirit hallowed the sad spectacle  
With decoration of ideal grace. (ll. 453–57)

Wordsworth’s affirmation of the consolatory, even redemptive, power of fantastic narrative reappears in a more secular version in Bruno Bettelheim’s arguments in favor of reading “real” fairy tales, replete with their violence, horror, and sexual suggestiveness, to children. Both see the realms of faery as emotional inoculation, with Bettelheim insisting that the child needs external examples against which to test the inner storms of anger, jealousy, hatred, or fear she experiences in daily life. The fairy stories offer images of feelings and behavior otherwise unmentionable and the child can use them to discuss or to resolve inwardly the conflicts such feelings inspire. For adults who treasure the combination of wonder and horror remembered from childhood encounters with the magic of stories, these views must be reassuring, even if seemingly counterintuitive in



an age grappling with the need to blame repeated horrors in the real world on corrupting influences. Those who assume that imaginative encounters with bad behavior must inspire imitation (always in *others*, of course, since such things “are not supposed to happen” in our own safe worlds) will have no patience with these arguments.

We live in an age when parents face the odd problem of warning their children of evil that looks exactly, perhaps, like themselves, or like grandpa, or their best friend’s father, or the postman. Evoking monsters—giants, ogres, devouring Baba Yagas—seems either irrelevant or superfluous, especially if they are likely (more than ever) to evoke delighted or dismissive giggles from their intended audiences. Marina Warner, in her latest omnibus of a cultural study, explores the ways we deal with fears, especially those projected fears that become narratives of the depredations visited on small or vulnerable folk (usually children) by malformed and gigantic figures of shadow and the night—the metonymic “bogyman” of her title. She traces the origins of many familiar and many strange monsters, seeking the motives for telling about them (who benefits from the infusion of fear? who is controlled or instructed by it?); she also speculates about the effects on children of hearing or seeing such stories, and in doing so suggests that the opposition between the Bettelheim school and those who see only harm and bad behavior resulting from such exposure is too simple either as diagnosis or as prescription.

As she did in her study of women in fairy stories, *From the Beast to the Blonde: On Fairy Stories and Their Tellers* (1994), Warner deploys her massive knowledge of literary and artistic and popular materials in her effort to show the ways monsters (primarily male monsters, though she offers fascinating discussions of such female threats as Scylla, Circe, and Medusa) both embody the deep fears of the tellers of their stories and function to manipulate the behavior of those credulous enough to be moved by them. The first section of the book is the most familiar, offering a synoptic retelling of the encounters of voyagers and travelers (or merely venturers out at night) with the kinds of threatening creatures destined to live in memory—most especially those known to devour their hapless quarry—Kronos and the Cyclops, of course, but also the devouring figures of fairy tales, from the unconscious cannibalism of the father in “The Juniper Tree” to the ogresses bent on eating their stepchildren to the gangster at the center of Peter Greenaway’s *The Cook, the Thief, His Wife and Her Lover*. From the visual arts, she analyzes, among many, both the Goya masterpiece, *Saturn Devouring His Children*, and the sixteenth-century popular woodcut, *Der Kinderfresser*, all chosen to illustrate the uneasy connections between the extremes of “love” (“You’re so cute I could eat you up”) and the shivers of horror at the threat of annihilation and elimination. As always with Warner, the coexistence, if not

symbiosis, of contradictory impulses leaves no room for simple moralism or psychologizing.

The second and briefest section is also, in some ways, the most interesting section of Warner's study. She analyzes lullabies, recognizing them as not only universal genre of human poetic and musical expression, but also as hypothetically partaking of a level of verbal expression that may be itself universal language, with the repetitious rhythms and "nonsense" vocalizing so characteristic of mothers soothing their restless or troubled infants. But Warner also observes the odd paradox of the lyrics to many lullabies. While the tones and melodies are mostly soothing, the stories or situations evoked in the lyrics (as in the very familiar "Hush-a-Bye, Baby") evoke threats to the child or, in some cases, express the anger and frustration of a poor mother worrying about feeding and sheltering her children. The lullaby, then, performs multiple functions, soothing the child, releasing the mother's tensions, but also, as Warner argues, stimulating the child's language acquisition and, by extension, the child's growing sense of herself as a separate being. This discussion may seem a bit digressive, though Warner attempts several links with the cannibalism and monsters of her first section, but it is a fascinating and uncommon study in itself—so much so that one might wish Warner would develop it further, to fill out some parts of the argument that seem perfunctory or rushed to conclusion.

The third section takes up the role of humor, especially the reflexive or self-mocking ironies that underlie the emergence of monsters as entertainment in contemporary culture. Warner again works with art history and the tradition of grotesque representation, especially as it features the mixing together of mismatched or contradictory elements into a single image or concept. Goya, especially in the example of the famous *Capricho*, "The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters," emerges again as a touchstone for the kind of grotesquerie that simultaneously fears, celebrates, and mocks the horrific, acknowledging its power but dismissing its effects. In this section, Warner introduces Gryllus, one of the most fascinating of her more arcane figures, in the context of her discussion of Circe's power to transform men into swine. According to Plutarch, Gryllus refuses to be returned to human form, and "engages Odysseus in a fleet-footed debate about virtue and speaks up wittily but passionately against the assumed superiority of the human condition" (274). Warner traces the uses of Gryllus in the literary tradition of theriophily, but also spots him as a tool of mockery used to dispel fear: "Thinking through beasts punctures pride; beasts are good to think with [ . . . ] especially when it comes to laughing at the very disturbance that beasts and monsters, distorted reflections of the human, hold up before us" (275). Certainly admirers of Maurice Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* must instantly see the truth of this suggestion.

Warner proceeds to trace the figure of Gryllus in literature and art, both as an agent of the humanist satires of human folly and as a constant reminder of the subversive, even revolutionary creative forces involved in and represented by “hybridity and metamorphosis,” subsequently linking him etymologically with the cricket of fable and thereby to Aesop who celebrates the cricket’s song as it affirms freedom from social conventions and repression. This propels her final, somewhat frenetic, compilation of materials to illustrate the constant interplay of fear and pleasure, of attraction and repulsion, of the search for comfort and security going on simultaneously with the demand for release, adventure, freedom to embrace the extreme, the hazardous, the repulsive and unclear. As she says in conclusion, “we need fear to know who we are and what we do not want to be” (387).

These comments cannot pretend to account for the vast array of materials or for the sometimes daring leaps of association by which Warner ties her materials together. At times the reader is left wondering for pages at a time what possible relevance the present examples might have, and indeed, Warner’s major studies have been criticized for being too inclusive, as though she cannot resist throwing in everything she has come across, regardless of pertinence. Even her set of hour-long radio talks, published as *Six Myths for Our Time*, have been faulted for incoherence because of this habit. But Warner’s big books, especially, are not academic monographs, defined by their precise exposition of a focused argument. She writes, rather, in the tradition of Robert Burton’s *Anatomy of Melancholy*, and her genre is itself permission to include as well as an invitation to the reader to enter and feast, perhaps to excess or perhaps in stages, with prospects of happy return. The sections of *No Go the Bogeyman* on lullabies and on the Grylli are themselves worth the expense of reading time to provide contextual awareness for them, but the many striking insights about fear and laughter, about the development of consciousness and of language, all bound up in storytelling, make navigation of this volume wonderfully rewarding. Whether Warner’s explorations of the roles of fear, wonder, and humor may illuminate or dismiss Wordsworth’s belief in the ennobling role of faery or Bettelheim’s confidence in the power of story to heal childrens’ inner conflicts may remain uncertain, but doubtless she has added to our ability to define the questions.

Thomas F Dillingham

Stephens College, Columbia, Missouri

***Strange and Secret Peoples: Fairies and Victorian Consciousness.*** By Carole G. Silver. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. 272 pp.

The nineteenth century carried on a strange love-affair with the fairies, and Carole Silver chronicles this affair from its late-eighteenth-century budding to its blossoming in the mid-nineteenth century and its ripening at century’s end.

This is a masterful examination of that century's burgeoning interest in the folklore of fairies, and an interpretation of this folklore in cultural and political terms. In short this book is both, as Silver points out, "a study in cultural history" and "an archaeology of a culture" (4, 5). This is a truly interdisciplinary book covering literary history, cultural history, anthropological history, and folklore. For the student of nineteenth-century literature, this book offers a coherent discussion of some of the century's esoteric writers whose names have popped up over the years in discussions of Romantic and Victorian literature: Walter Scott, Thomas Crofton Croker, Thomas Keightley, Max Müller, Andrew Lang, Macleod Yearsley, and Sabine Baring-Gould for example. Silver places such writers in the context of nineteenth-century cultural and social history. In doing so, she explains much concerning the Victorian sensibility, especially its angst, for the presence of fairies among the Victorians gives indication of just how conflicted these people were. To the student of folklore, Silver offers a fascinating recovery of just how bound by ideology the seeker after human origins and social structures is.

In a short review it is impossible to give adequate notice of the range of Silver's interests, from folklore to art history to literature to women's studies and even to medical history. She begins with a review of the Romantic interest in fairies, an interest sparked by both nationalism and the reaction against an arid rationalism. Although she ranges over several writers, her focus is most closely on Scott, Allan Cunningham, and James Hogg. For Romantic painters, she turns to Fuseli and Blake, as one would expect, and she ends this review with a glance at "Romantic Fairy Scholarship" in the work of Croker, Keightley, and Robert Southey. The Romantic interest in faerie becomes more organized after Victoria assumes the throne, and it takes form in the "new sciences": anthropology, ethnology, and archaeology. Finally, the great impetus to the study of fairies comes with the interest in Darwinism in the 1860s. After this opening survey, the book contains six chapters dealing with changelings, fairy brides, goblins and their ilk, fairy cruelty, and the growing sense that the fairies are leaving England.

Several themes recur from chapter to chapter: the reaction against industry and mechanization, the fear of female power, the view of the little people as "other" (that is, foreign), and the spiritual pulse of the Christian nation and empire. What begins in the late eighteenth century as a reaction to the invasion of the countryside by dark and even satanic mills intensifies during the Victorian period until the fairies become a metonymy for a lost age of innocence and pastoral ease. One result of this equation of things fairy with things pastoral is a stronger link between fairies and the nursery as the century advances. By the time we reach Kenneth Grahame's Great God Pan in *The Wind in the Willows* (1908), fairies carry a heavy burden of nostalgia, one that often surfaces in

visions of the child and the child's affinity with and for the little people. The inclusion of Pan in this consideration of "strange" peoples (Silver does not include Grahame in her discussion, but she does discuss the Pans of W. B. Yeats and Algernon Blackwood) suggests the connection between the "strange" people and paganism. The tension between Christianity and the fairies runs through the book; paradoxically, the fairies represent a threat to traditional orthodoxies and a means of preserving spirituality in an age of scientism.

But what is most striking in Silver's study are the themes of female power and fear of the other. Her exploration of Darwinist and euhemerist (the belief that fairies are real and derive from early invaders or early indigenous peoples) approaches to the existence of fairies leads her into fascinating, if disturbing, territory. Fairies, it seems, may be related to African pygmies—a theory concocted by David MacRitchie, who was pulling together a half century of theorizing of the little people as barbarians of one kind or another. Silver's chapter on changelings shows how figures from folk belief were tied to various illnesses, including mental illness. Silver points out, rather chillingly I might add, that Dr. John Langdon Hayden Down (remembered in the condition known as Downs Syndrome) "argued that white Caucasian idiots (who reminded him of 'normal' African, Malay, American Indian, and oriental peoples) represented arrested development and owed their appearance and mental deficiency to a retention of traits that would be considered normal in adults of 'lower races'" (82–83). In the chapter "Little Goblin Men," Silver takes such exploration into a direct equation between folk creatures such as fairies, goblins, gnomes and so on and the question of race. By arguing that the racial "other" descend from creatures the folk know as goblins, kobolds, etc., Victorian ethnologists can maintain a belief in the superiority of the white Anglo-Saxon male.

I say "male" because much of the discussion in this book also shows that the fairies were useful to the Victorian cultural elite in that they neatly praised the feminine while at the same time keeping woman firmly in her place. Chapters on fairy brides and on evil in the fairy world make it abundantly clear that the woman's place was in the home (and more particularly in the kitchen), and that when she departed from her allotted place she became the face of evil. What Silver points out is that much of the folklore the Victorians inherited contained what we might term subversive material—independent women, criticism of male abuse of females, erotic aggressiveness on the part of women, absence of the motherly instinct—and the (largely) male collectors and commentators felt the necessity to domesticate and tame such potentially subversive material. Hans Christian Andersen is a case in point; Silver asserts that Andersen took folk materials and christianized, domesticated, and softened them (107). I have no doubt that she is right. However, the use of folk material in the work of such women writers as Dinah Mulock, Lucy Crane, Frances Browne, Isabella Ritchie,

---

or Harriet Child-Pemberton might give us another perspective to the treatment of folk materials in the period. But these writers do not make an appearance in *Strange and Secret Peoples*.

I mention the absence of certain writers not as a criticism but as an extension of Silver's work. What she had done works well on its own terms. This is a long overdue study, especially significant to anyone interested in the full range of Victorian culture from its scientific and pseudoscientific extensions of Darwinism, ethnography, and genetics to its focus on the occult "sciences"—theosophy, spiritualism, and so on. The Cottingley fairy photographs nicely bring the various strands together, and Silver discusses these at the beginning and end of her book. This is doubly nice when we consider that these photographs are still with us, turning up in such contemporary works as Terry Jones and Brian Froud's *Lady Cottington's Pressed Fairy Book* (1994) and the 1998 film, *Fairy Tale: A True Story*.

Roderick McGillis  
University of Calgary