**Feminist Fairy Tales**

**Arts & Sciences 113.xx, Freshman Seminar**

**1 Semester-hour Credit**

**Day/ Time Room**

Instructor name: Jennifer Higginbotham Office Hours: TBA

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**Course Description**

Before *Disney* transformed fairy tales like Sleeping Beauty and The Little Mermaid into feel-good movies, they had a darker past as oral stories passed down through generations, a past that contemporary feminist writers like Angela Carter, Margaret Atwood, and Kelly Link have tapped into to reimagine gender in today’s world. In this class, we’ll explore why stories that seemingly reinforce patriarchal values have proven such a popular and valuable resource for women writers and artists.

**Course Objectives**

1. To learn about the origins of familiar fairy tales and the different versions that exist in other cultures
2. To engage critically with contemporary feminist writers and artists who revise fairy tales as a central part of their work
3. To combine critical thinking and cultural analysis to produce a creative product

**Texts**

**-***The Classic Fairy Tales*, ed. Maria Tatar

-*Don’t Bet on the Prince,* ed. Jack Zipes

-Angela Carter, *The Bloody Chamber*

-Kelly Link, *Stranger Things Happen*

-*Fearless Girls, Wise Women, and Beloved Sisters: Heroines in Folktales from Around the World*

**Course Policies**

Attendance: Because this is a discussion-based seminar, it will only succeed if we are all present; therefore, attendance is mandatory. One absence will be automatically excused, but any others will require documentation of a medical emergency (not a regular doctor’s appointment) or family emergency, or you will be marked unexcused. Any unexcused absence beyond the single “freebie” will result in a grade of Unsatisfactory.

Class participation: I expect everyone to come to class having done the reading and ready to dazzle us with their wit and insight, or at the very least to listen actively. I understand that some students are shy and quiet. The occasional helpful comment can be better than constant, off-topic chatter, but I will call on students to share their points of view to encourage you to develop your public speaking skills. I do not do this to catch you out, but to help you become comfortable speaking up and voicing your opinions, a critical skill for succeeding in today’s workplace.

Written Assignments:

1. Weekly Response Postings: A one-page double-spaced response paper is due to Carmen by Sunday at midnight. All students are responsible for reading the postings of their fellow students by class on Tuesday, as the postings will form the basis for our class discussion. More than 2 late postings or postings that do not meet the length requirements will result in a grade of Unsatisfactory.
2. Fairy Tale Revision: every student will engage in their own revision of a fairy tale, using any medium of their choice, whether video, dance, digital media, short story, poem, etc. These will be evaluated based on effort and creativity.
3. Oral Assignments: During our last class, we will have a session where you will exhibit your fairy tale revisions.

Grading: This class with be graded as Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory in order to encourage creative thinking without the anxiety produced by letter grades. However, that means that students must be conscientious about attendance, reading materials, and taking the assignments seriously. Students must complete all weekly response postings (with no more than 2 late postings), attend classes according to the attendance policy, and produce and present their fairy tale revision in order to receive a grade of S.

**Academic Misconduct**

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (<http://studentlife.osu.edu/pdfs/csc_12-31-07.pdf>).

**Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

**Week 1—Our Fairy Tales, Ourselves**

Reading: None

Due: Come ready to talk about your own experiences growing up with fairy tales

**Week 2—Can Fairy Tales Be Feminist?**

Reading:

1. Alison Lurie, “Fairy Tale Liberation” (<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/1970/12/17/fairy-tale-liberation/>)
2. Marcia Lieberman, “Some Day My Prince Will Come” (Zipes)

Due: Weekly response paper due to Carmen discussion board by Sunday night

**Week 3—Sleeping Beauty**

Reading**:**

1. Giambattista Basile, “The Sun, Moon, and Talia” (Carmen)
2. Grimm’s Fairy Tale “Little Briar Rose” ([https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Grimm%27s\_Household\_Tales,\_Volume\_1/Little\_Briar-Rose](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Grimm%27s_Household_Tales%2C_Volume_1/Little_Briar-Rose))
3. Anne Sexton, “Briar Rose” (Zipes)

Due: Weekly response paper due to Carmen discussion board by Sunday night

**Week 4—Cinderella, 1**

Reading:

1. Introduction and Cinderella and versions in Tatar (Yeh-hsien, Donkeyskin, Cinderella, Catskin, The Story of the Black Cow, Lin Lan, The Princess in the Suit of Leather)

Due: Weekly response paper due to Carmen Sunday night

**Week 4—Cinderella 2**

Reading:

1. Kelly Link, “Shoe and Marriage” (Carmen)
2. View *Into the Woods*

Due: Weekly Carmen response post due Sunday

**Week 5—Little Red Riding Hood I**

Reading:

1. Introduction to Little Red Riding Hood in Tatar with the stories (The Story of the Grandmother, Little Red Riding Hood, Little Red Cap, The Little Girl and the Wolf, Goldflower and the Bear)

Due: Weekly Carmen response post due Sunday

**Week 6—Little Red Riding Hood 2**

Reading:

1. Angela Carter, *The Bloody Chamber*

Due: Weekly response post due to Carmen Sunday

**Week 7—Little Red Riding Hood 3**

Reading:

1. View the film *The Company of Wolves*

Due: Weekly responsepost due to Carmen by Sunday night

**Week 8—Little Mermaid**

Reading:

1. Hans Christian Anderson, “The Little Mermaid” (Tatar)
2. “The Princess who Stood on Her Own Two Feet” (Zipes)

Due: Weekly response post due to Carmen by Sunday night

**Week 9—Bluebeard**

Reading:

1. Entire Bluebeard section in Tatar

Due: Weekly response post due to Carmen by Sunday night

**Week 10—Workshop on Creative Projects**

Due: Bring in ideas for your own revisions of a fairy tale

**Week 11—Native American Tales**

Reading:

1. Selections from *Fearless Girls, Wise Women, and Beloved Sisters*

Due: Weekly response post due to Carmen by Sunday night

**Week 12—North Africa and the Middle East**

Reading:

1. Selections from *Fearless Girls, Wise Women, and Beloved Sisters*

Due: Weekly response post due to Carmen by Sunday night

**Week 13—Tales from Asia and the Pacific**

Reading:

1. Selections from *Fearless Girls, Wise Women, and Beloved Sisters*

Due: Weekly response post due to Carmen by Sunday night

**Week 14—Symposium**

Session to present your fairy tale revisions to the public.