Parody and Poesis in Feminist Fairy Tales
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Abstract
À la lumière de la réécriture des contes de fées par, notamment, les écrivains féministes, l'auteur établit une différence entre la parodie, qui nous sensibilise à la nécessité d'un changement de mentalité, et la poesis qui, elle, crée une nouvelle image et une nouvelle compréhension de notre situation dans le monde.

Full Text:

Traditional feminist criticism of the "classic" fairy tale texts rests on the fact that stories that reflect traditional patriarchal values survive, while those tales whose characters shed their archetypes and step outside the bounds of accepted behavior disappear into oblivion. Thus, the fairy tales told and retold today are not necessarily representative of the genre. Within this socio-political and -historical perspective, early feminists (1950s and 1960s) examined the roles of women embedded in the folktales and fairy tales that have survived and found them to be "an unfortunate source of negative female stereotypes . . . [and] . . . one of the many socializing forces that discouraged females from realizing their full human potential." Andrea Dworkin (1974). Before we discuss fairy tales and their feminist reinterpretations in class, I often ask them to recollect the fairy tale that made the strongest impact on them (my students, not the fairy tales) as children, and then we proceed to reinterpret the cultural symbols in the tales as a class. This is always LOTS of fun. BTW, I'm wondering how we would answer the same question. The fairy tale I remember the most vividly is "Stone Soup," but I won't bother to go into why unless people are interested in discussing this topic. If you are looking for a feminist analysis of fairy tales, I have always found Andrea Dworkin's analysis very useful. It is in one of her older books "Woman Hating" (Dutton, 1974). She discusses the roles that many women play in Western fairy tales and their implications. Feminist Fairy Tales is a 1996 anthology of revised and original fairy tales by feminist Barbara G. Walker. Quite a few fairy tales are less than friendly towards women (case in point, there is an entire fairy tale genre about heroic wife-beating). Walker sought to right the wrongs by rewriting famous and lesser-known fairy tales (as well as some well known folkloric and mythology-derived tales) to empower female readers, especially those reading in the children's section. Famous tales like Snow White...