



**FRAMING FEMININITY IN FAIRY TALES : THE FEMALE STEREOTYPES IN
*CINDERELLA AND THE SLEEPING BEAUTY IN THE WOOD***



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ABSTRACT

Fairy tales, being a form of folk literature, continues to change and evolve according to the interpreters who gave them a written form. After years of being recognized as a source of entertainment, storytelling is now being viewed as a powerful tool for change and the overall development of an individual's personality, as well as an effective method to address social issues. As the characters depicted in children's fiction act as powerful cultural agents,

fairy tales like *Cinderella* and *The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood* play a major role in the socialization process of the children who read them. However, a positive movement has been noted in the genre of fairy tales in the form of "feminist" versions of fairy tales. Perrault's classical fairy tales have thus been rewritten by feminists in recent times. Unfortunately, a close reading of many fairytales reveals that they set an

oversimplified and un-questioned gender role stereotypes. As far as female stereotypes are concerned, the aim here is to explore how female characters in these fairy tales are represented as typical beautiful, submissive, enduring women

whose happiness rests upon the men in their life. The fairy tales thus become a mere tool that men use or exploit to uphold and perpetuate the patriarchal conventions of society.

KEYWORDS

Children's fiction, fairy tales, female stereotypes, femininity, Perrault, Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty