

**Enchanted: A Qualitative  
Examination of Fairy-Tales  
and Women's Intimate Relational Patterns**

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Enchanted: A Qualitative Examination of Fairy-Tales  
and Women's Intimate Relational Patterns

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DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

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## Abstract

Fairy-tales and myth have long been held as ways of communicating what is happening in society and within a culture. This dissertation study examined the interview narratives of 10 women regarding the impact of fairy-tales and myth on female identity in the context of intimate relationship patterns. This study utilized definitions of fairy-tale and myth derived from Biechonski's (2005) framework, while augmenting these conceptualizations with depth psychology perspectives. The study's findings were produced using qualitative, phenomenological research methods (Merriam, 2009). Results of the study demonstrated that some of the female participants identified with fairy-tales during their youth; however, all participants indicated that real life is far more challenging when contrasted with typical Western fairy-tale stories that often portray an easeful outcome to engagement in a romantic relationship. Common themes that emerged throughout this study were those of status, external factors such as appealing fashions and coiffed hair, familial upbringing and witnessing the parental relationship. Having experienced a loving attachment from one's parents emerged as a guiding theme, as did exposure to positive qualities displayed within the parental relationship itself. Such themes like respect between one's parents, communication, and commitment were also present in the narratives. In summary, eleven themes emerged from the interviews. The themes were Cinderella/Beauty and the Beast, Prince Charming, External Factors, Status, Familial Upbringing, Parents, Respect, Communication, Commitment, Connection, and Independence. Some possible implications for clinical work were discussed.

*Keywords: Fairy-tales, intimacy, identity development, relationships, romance, and women*

*The electronic version of the Dissertation is accessible in the open-access Ohiolink ETD Center.*

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## **Dedication**

To my family and friends, both in Illinois and California, for their encouragement and support. To my mom, Sylvia, for her love and continued sense of humor throughout this time. To my dad, Charles, for his love and support. To Sean, my best friend and love, for being patient and understanding. Lastly, to Olive, who was my constant companion and friend. Every day you are thought of and missed.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

*A king and queen once upon a time reigned in a country a great way off, where there were in those days fairies. Now this king and queen had plenty of money, and plenty of fine clothes to wear, and plenty of good things to eat and drink, and a coach to ride out in every day: but though they had been married many years they had no children, and this grieved them very much indeed.*

*But one day as the queen was walking by the side of the river, at the bottom of the garden, she saw a poor little fish, that had thrown itself out of the water, and lay gasping and nearly dead on the bank. Then the queen took pity on the little fish, and threw it back again into the river; and before it swam away it lifted its head out of the water and said, 'I know what your wish is, and it shall be fulfilled, in return for your kindness to me—you will soon have a daughter.' What the little fish had foretold soon came to pass; and the queen had a little girl, so very beautiful that the king could not cease looking on it for joy, and said he would hold a great feast and make merry, and show the child to all the land.*

*So he asked his kinsmen, and nobles, and friends, and neighbours. But the queen said, 'I will have the fairies also, that they might be kind and good to our little daughter.' Now there were thirteen fairies in the kingdom; but as the king and queen had only twelve golden dishes for them to eat out of, they were forced to leave one of the fairies without asking her. So twelve fairies came, each with a high red cap on her head, and red shoes with high heels on her feet, and a long white wand in her hand: and after the feast was over they gathered round in a ring and gave all their best gifts to the little princess. One gave her goodness, another beauty, another riches, and so on till she had all that was good in the world.*

*Just as eleven of them had done blessing her, a great noise was heard in the courtyard, and word was brought that the thirteenth fairy was come, with a black cap on her head, and black shoes on her feet, and a broomstick in her hand: and presently up she came into the dining-hall. Now, as she had not been asked to the feast she was very angry, and scolded the king and queen very much, and set to work to take her revenge. So she cried out, 'The king's daughter shall, in her fifteenth year, be wounded by a spindle, and fall down dead.' Then the twelfth of the friendly fairies, who had not yet given her gift, came forward, and said that the evil wish must be fulfilled, but that she could soften its mischief; so her gift was, that the king's daughter, when the spindle wounded her, should not really die, but should only fall asleep for a hundred years.*

*However, the king hoped still to save his dear child altogether from the threatened evil; so he ordered that all the spindles in the kingdom should be bought up and burnt. But all the gifts of the first eleven fairies were in the meantime fulfilled; for the princess was so beautiful, and well behaved, and good, and wise, that everyone who knew her loved her.*

*It happened that, on the very day she was fifteen years old, the king and queen were not at home, and she was left alone in the palace. So she roved about by herself, and looked at all the rooms and chambers, till at last she came to an old tower, to which there was a narrow staircase ending with a little door. In the door there was a golden key, and when she turned it the door sprang open, and there sat an old lady spinning away very busily. 'Why, how now, good mother,' said the princess; 'what are you doing there?' 'Spinning,' said the old lady, and nodded her head, humming a tune, while buzz! went the wheel. 'How prettily that little thing turns round!' said the princess, and took the spindle and began to try and spin. But scarcely had she touched it, before the fairy's prophecy was fulfilled; the spindle wounded her, and she fell down lifeless on the ground.*

*However, she was not dead, but had only fallen into a deep sleep; and the king and the queen, who had just come home, and all their court, fell asleep too; and the horses slept in the stables, and the dogs in the court, the pigeons on the house-top, and the very flies slept upon the walls. Even the fire on the hearth left off blazing, and went to sleep; the jack stopped, and the spit that was turning about with a goose upon it for the king's dinner stood still; and the cook, who was at that moment pulling the kitchen-boy by the hair to give him a box on the ear for something he had done amiss, let him go, and both fell asleep; the butler, who was slyly tasting the ale, fell asleep with the jug at his lips: and thus everything stood still, and slept soundly.*

*A large hedge of thorns soon grew round the palace, and every year it became higher and thicker; till at last the old palace was surrounded and hidden, so that not even the roof or the chimneys could be seen. But there went a report through all the land of the beautiful sleeping Briar Rose (for so the king's daughter was called): so that, from time to time, several kings' sons came, and tried to break through the thicket into the palace. This, however, none of them could ever do; for the thorns and bushes laid hold of them, as it were with hands; and there they stuck fast, and died wretchedly.*

*After many, many years there came a king's son into that land: and an old man told him the story of the thicket of thorns; and how a beautiful palace stood behind it, and how a wonderful princess, called Briar Rose, lay in it asleep, with all her court. He told, too, how he had heard from his grandfather that many, many princes had come, and had tried to break through the thicket, but that they had all stuck fast in it, and died. Then the young prince said, 'All this shall not frighten me; I will go and see this Briar Rose.' The old man tried to hinder him, but he was bent upon going.*

*Now that very day the hundred years were ended; and as the prince came to the thicket he saw nothing but beautiful flowering shrubs, through which he went with ease, and they shut in after him as thick as ever. Then he came at last to the palace, and there in the court lay the dogs asleep; and the horses were standing in the stables; and on the roof sat the pigeons fast asleep, with their heads under their*

*wings. And when he came into the palace, the flies were sleeping on the walls; the spit was standing still; the butler had the jug of ale at his lips, going to drink a draught; the maid sat with a fowl in her lap ready to be plucked; and the cook in the kitchen was still holding up her hand, as if she was going to beat the boy.*

*Then he went on still farther, and all was so still that he could hear every breath he drew; till at last he came to the old tower, and opened the door of the little room in which Briar Rose was; and there she lay, fast asleep on a couch by the window. She looked so beautiful that he could not take his eyes off her, so he stooped down and gave her a kiss. But the moment he kissed her she opened her eyes and awoke, and smiled upon him; and they went out together; and soon the king and queen also awoke, and all the court, and gazed on each other with great wonder. And the horses shook themselves, and the dogs jumped up and barked; the pigeons took their heads from under their wings, and looked about and flew into the fields; the flies on the walls buzzed again; the fire in the kitchen blazed up; round went the jack, and round went the spit, with the goose for the king's dinner upon it; the butler finished his draught of ale; the maid went on plucking the fowl; and the cook gave the boy the box on his ear.*

*And then the prince and Briar Rose were married, and the wedding feast was given; and they lived happily together all their lives long.* Grimm, J., & Grimm, W. (1812) Briar Rose. (E. Taylor, & M. Edwards, Trans.) *Grimm's Fairy Tales*. Retrieved from <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2591/2591-h/2591-h.htm>

The term “fairy-tale” conjures up many different images among individuals, depending on a person’s gender, culture, and cohort. Images typically conjured include witches, frogs, princesses, princes, talking animals, forests, magic, fairy godmothers, love’s-first-kiss, and most of all, a love that is happily-ever-after (von Franz, 1990, 1993, & 1996). Using the example of Sleeping Beauty or as The Brothers Grimm refer to her, “Briar Rose,” Carl Jung and Marie Louise von Franz, two Jungian analysts, would say these images or symbols within the story are archetypes. Jung (1949) believed archetypes existed within the collective unconscious. Archetypes are symbols for the experiences of mankind and for human characteristics such as: life and death; fear and happiness; as well as for aspects such as food; danger; sunrise and sunset and so on (Jung, 1949). Metaphorically, archetypes provide a closer look into one’s psyche. Archetypes are like a frame. The frame remains the same, but the image that appears inside the

frame will depend upon the circumstances (Zipes, 2006). Studying archetypes may serve to inform us in regard to how women conceptualize about and perceive relationships and how they do so from the standpoint of the fairy-tale.

### **A Brief Analysis of Sleeping Beauty**

The symbolic meaning of the fish, according to Bettelheim (1976) could represent the conception of Sleeping Beauty. The proclamation made by the fish may represent that the act of wishing on something alone can cause the queen to become pregnant. The element of water could also be seen as a metaphor pertaining to the womb (Bettelheim, 1976). von Franz (1993) views the fish as a maternal animal brought forth to provide fertility to the woman and, in essence, help with childbirth.

After the birth of Sleeping Beauty, one begins to encounter the metaphor pertaining to the curse that is placed upon Sleeping Beauty. The curse within fairy-tales has the symbolic meaning of menstruation and fertility; and the blossoming of womanhood (Bettelheim, 1976). The curse came from an old woman, adding to the significance of this symbol being passed down from woman to woman hence; “the curse” to move to the responsibilities of adulthood and away from childhood.

The women within Sleeping Beauty’s life represent variations of the mother archetype (Jung, 1959). For example, the mother archetype exhibits the positive, nurturing side of life and the negative, devouring side of life (Jung, 1959). The mother and the 12 wise fairies all represent the positive, nurturing side of life versus the last wise fairy that places the curse on Sleeping Beauty out of spite for not being invited. The last wise fairy represents the devouring side of life (Jung, 1959).

Rejection played a role in the last wise fairy becoming evil. Although the last wise fairy was not evil to begin with, the rejection by the King had a negative transforming effect on the fairy. The negative transformation was targeted toward the King, Queen, and Sleeping Beauty, ultimately changing the family's life. The transformation may be viewed as the negative mother complex targeted against Sleeping Beauty. For example, in real life, a daughter may have a positive mother experience, but the mother may actually have been overly protective of the daughter, perhaps due to rejections the mother had in her life. These unresolved conflicts that the mother has internalized are presently being placed upon the daughter (Bettelheim, 1976; Jung 1959). Furthermore, this overly positive mother archetype could result in the child going to sleep, wanting to block out the mother's intrusiveness, as is seen with Sleeping Beauty. The daughter does not achieve individuation, but instead becomes an appendage of her mother. The daughter is unable to develop a healthy ego complex and she continues to identify with the mother complex (Jung, 1959).

Bettelheim (1976) used the sleep metaphor to represent, "the long quiet concentration on oneself that is needed" (p. 225). On the outside, the sleeping phase may look like passivity, but it is actually a symbol of rebirth, one reaching for a higher stage of maturity and understanding (Bettelheim, 1976). It is the fairy-tale's way of expressing the wish for a "higher meaning in life; deeper consciousness, more self-knowledge, and greater maturity" (Bettelheim, 1976, p. 214).

On the other hand, other scholars may interpret the 100 years of sleep to represent passivity. Sleeping Beauty sleeps or waits for the masculine side to come and rescue her from her slumber. During this period of sleep, Sleeping Beauty is unable to change and develop into a woman; instead, she is kept in adolescent captivity, restrained from growing into adulthood and

eventually into a separate individual (Jung, 1959). This inability to experience and grow into a whole person results in a halt within the individuation process (von Franz, 1990).

Patriarchal dimensions are also seen throughout the fairy-tale of Sleeping Beauty. For example, the father insisting that all the spindles are destroyed in an effort to shield Sleeping Beauty from the curse. The spindle itself has a few metaphorical meanings such as spinning or dreaming. In addition, the spindle is most likely seen as a symbol of sexual adulthood (Bettelheim, 1975). The father could be seen as resistant to Sleeping Beauty becoming an adult, hence, he takes away her opportunity to experience her own sexual awakening. She will only be ready to experience this awakening when the masculine side deems it appropriate, resulting in the young prince rescuing Sleeping Beauty after 100 years of self-reflection and waiting (Bettelheim, 1975; Jung 1959).

Lastly, it is important to note, all the figures within fairy-tales and myths are abstract creations. von Franz (1993) stated, "They are archetypal figures lacking human amplification. The figures are not filled with actual life, they are not human individuals," thus, the fairy-tale and all its components should be viewed metaphorically, not literally (p. 18). The imagery in fairy-tales often represents aspects of the self. The images move from an undifferentiated form in the beginning of the story, to overcoming some of the obstacles, to healthy maturation and, to finally the integration of opposites and the process of individuation. The metaphors may be explored within the context of the individual or from the larger systemic context of a culture or society.

The fairy-tale, Sleeping Beauty clearly provides specific metaphors pertaining to women and relationships. The themes of patriarchy, passivity, individuation, and rejection are seen



throughout *Sleeping Beauty* which may aid in understanding women's psyche and the way in which women interpret their lived experiences. Incorporating the masculine and feminine archetypes illustrates the complexities of relationships and how these complexities could become ingrained within one's psyche. Understanding the metaphors and symbols that are used throughout this or any other fairy-tale may provide some insight pertaining to one's own life and the relationships that arise from such.

As stated above, previous research has shown that the impact of fairy-tale imagery on female emotional development can involve both positive and negative manifestations (von Franz, 1996). For example, if the fairy-tale imagery evokes a positive memory or fantasy for the female, this may result in contributing to a healthy sense of self. On the other hand, if the fairy-tale imagery is negative, the manifestation may be shown by negative behaviors such as gossiping, spreading rumors, or cheating on a significant other. Striving for a "happily-ever-after" and the perfect prince is not just a myth, but could lead to skewed thinking when it comes to a female's intimate relationships (von Franz, 1996). Women may develop faulty thinking and unrealistic expectations based upon a myth that is amplified within a fantastical story such as a princess receiving a grand love and a life that is happily-ever-after. Day by day, the life after the fairy-tale is not viewed or perceived from a mature perspective. A woman may enter a relationship expecting that all romantic love is suppose to be perfect, when in reality there are many imperfections within any relationship. This is where the female's skewed thinking could manifest.

Story telling is universal; fairy-tales, myths, and folklore are ubiquitous throughout human history and as such, they become integral expressions of culture and sources of meaning making (Segal, 1998). Mythical stories that have been passed down from generation to

generation have influenced the imaginations of children and adults alike. Psychologically, adults may turn to fantastical stories in order to relieve loneliness and to envision a better life circumstance. Children may use these stories as a guidepost that negative situations can be remedied and positive interactions are possible (Bettelheim, 1976). The use of fairy-tale imagery and its amplification is a technique that some therapists use as a way to elicit deeper access to unconscious thought with their clients. Amplification is a technique used to deepen awareness of unconscious material by use of focusing on symbols, images, and mythology embedded in dreams and fairy-tale motifs, (Jung, 1954). This type of exploration through the amplification of image/symbol helps to deepen the experience of the different parts of the self and bring greater complexity, authenticity, and meaning to the understanding of the human condition, both personal and collective (Rowland, 2011). For example, a woman may have a dream that revolves around a dominating male figure. Using amplification to bring into focus the meaning around this male figure could aid the woman in uncovering unconscious father issues that are being played out in her current relationship.

According to von Franz (2010), “the point is that fairy-tales as a genre addresses the self, not the ego” (p. 327). Through the characters in a fairy-tale, one can learn about themselves and their experiences, which may lead to an opening to the individuation process. With this understanding the fairy-tale could be used to encourage imagination, fantasy, humor, and open discussions about intimate revelations. Psychologically, understanding one’s self through a revelation during therapy could release unconscious material that was driving the individual’s thoughts and behaviors. Amplification is also utilized to examine and reframe human problems as well as to analyze repressed unconscious material (Biechonski, 2005). For example, in subjective amplification a dreamer uses active imagination to associate to a dream symbol in

order to grasp it better. In objective amplification the analyst collects themes from mythology, alchemy, religion, and other sources to illuminate, or amplify, archetypal symbols produced in dreams or fantasy (Jung, 1954). Using the fairy-tale as a projective in either the subjective or objective amplification technique could help women identify certain aspects and themes of their lives that are not readily available to consciousness. For example, who in the story does a client identify with and why? Is there a specific situation portrayed in the fairy-tale that seems familiar or relational to the client? With the foregoing in mind, the purpose of this study was to examine whether identifying with traditional fairy-tales has had an impact on a female's intimate relationship patterns. This could include, but is not limited to, a woman's notion of intimacy, attachments, and perceptions of men.

Using fairy-tales through amplification allows women to examine their own psychological development. For example, examining themes and symbols in fairy-tales may serve to assist clients in gaining emotional insight into their relationships and examining attachment styles and behavioral issues. There is a paucity of research in regards to studying women's identity development and intimate relationships by way of the fairy-tale. However, investigating these issues in relation to the traditional fairy-tale may further enhance our understanding of females' interactional patterns in reference to their intimate relationships. As such, women's responses to fairy-tale images and themes may shed light on identifying healthy psychological states and existing pathological states (Le Guernic, 2004; Jung, 1953). Le Guernic (2004) stated, "The influence of fairy-tales on young minds at a subconscious level corresponds with those in his or her script" (p. 218). Moreover, as the child ages, her script will also evolve into a more complex adult script with additional nuances and levels. Through the years many adults need to develop useful tools for coping with their relationship issues as their own scripts

develop and change. Some tools women may want to develop over their lives could be a healthy sense of self, developing a sound ego functioning and its accompanying self-confidence.

Moreover, positive self-esteem and developing positive emotional insight regarding how women want to live their lives may also prove to be helpful. According to Mitchell (2010), “fairy-tales can help us gain insights into some of our basic tendencies. Frequently, these stories provide clues as to the basic struggles of human beings” (p. 264).

These basic psychological and emotional struggles may be seen in the context of the intimate relationship (Mitchell, 2010). Moreover, the study of fairy-tales helps us extrapolate how a female’s intimate relationship patterns are scripted. For example, many fairy-tales illustrate how women should wait for the men to come and rescue them from their mundane life. This is seen in Cinderella where the prince rescues Cinderella from being the housemaid (mundane life). Unconsciously, these patterns of submissiveness or dependence within the fairy-tale could be playing out within the woman’s own life, unbeknownst to her. Bringing this information to a conscious level and examining it may bring change within the relationship itself. Rose (1985) and Johnson (1983) found that for women, beliefs about romantic love and marriage are often characterized by idealism. This idealism persists throughout women’s lives despite their personal experiences. “The ideal type is not based on the description of an actual individual, but instead is a standard by which people interpret their experiences” (Averill & Boothroyd, 1977, p. 245). Psychologically, it is one’s own idealized feminine self-projected onto a real man. A woman’s animus projection could be viewed as an endless repetition of thoughts such as, “The only thing I want is love, but he doesn’t love me” (Jung, 1959). The reasoning made by the woman is only her opinion; her partner has not confirmed it. She is filled with judgments that are being projected onto her partner (Jung, 1949).

The impression of an ideal relationship can be traced back to the mother-infant bond wherein the infant begins to idealize the maternal object that seemingly meets all physical and emotional needs for love, security, containment, and predictability (Bowlby, 1969). On the other hand, the infant may not get his/her needs met and may experience rage as the result. Over time, there is rejection of the maternal object. According to Zipes (2006), the idealized relationship is due, in part, to the pervasive influence of Disney fairy-tales, specifically. Disney fairy-tales speak more to the purified forms of fantasy and romance in contrast to The Grimm Brothers fairy-tales which speak more to the darker narrative side of stories reflected within a given culture (Zipes, 2006).

Examining relational patterns from this perspective may aid in helping females work through persisting issues when it comes to intimate relationships. Understanding how the female idealizes her partner, may explain how she perceives herself and the other in the context of the relationship. For example, individuals are never perfect. Therefore, given some time each partner will reveal imperfections, thus, slowly shedding the idealized version that the other is holding. Possibly revealing vulnerable, imperfect qualities to one's partner, the idealized version that one holds may fall short of each other's hopes and desires. Due to the disillusionment and disappointment of the relationship, the fantasy did not materialize (Murray, Holmes, & Griffin, 1996). Moreover, many intimates struggle with emotional vulnerability (Murray, et al. 1996). Bowlby (1969) and Ainsworth (1978) suggested that persons are strongly motivated to seek feelings of security and safety in their relationships and to find partners that fit with their attachment needs. Interestingly, attachment concerns such as these are aggravated by an intimate's perceptions of the risks posed by depending on a less than perfect partner (Murray et al., 1996). In addition, if the desire for security motivates this process of idealization, the

female's specific hopes and dreams may shape the motivated illusions placed upon the intimate. Murray et al.'s (1996) cross-sectional study revealed that, "individual's self-images and schemas for the ideal partner appeared to shape their illusions: the more positive their ideals and self-images, the more idealized their impressions of their partners" (p. 1156). The negative side of idealizing one's partner could result in long-term risks. The object (partner) of the woman's desire may start to feel a burden of living up to the woman's ideal image of that object (partner) (Murray et al., 1996). Understanding the female's psychological meaning of how she idealizes someone or something could aid in helping her work through any persisting relational issues.

The continuing appeal of the romantic script speaks to its identification of basic female psychological concerns or unfulfilled longings, most of which have little to do with the reality of maintaining a relationship (Rose, 1985). For instance, a woman's desire to be rescued by a man may be fueled by the idea that this would result in possibly a happier life than the life she is now leading or has ever known. In turn, this may well speak to an unfulfilled longing she already possesses. Or perhaps the basic element of being rescued from a mundane life may speak to an unfulfilled longing. A woman's unfulfilled longings may in reality be a yearning to escape the loneliness and anxiety that she is feeling, which may push her into fantasizing about her own romantic script (Rose, 1985). This theme is common in romantic movies or romance novels, all of which foster the idealism of romance, which many women are seeking. The romantic wounding that many women experience could be related to their longings or yearnings for a fantasy to come true. Fulfillment of the fantasy may in fact fulfill the woman's basic psychological needs such as love and security (Rose, 1985). In essence, culture aids in producing the romance script. What is happening within a culture at any given time will be reflected throughout that society, including one's beliefs and hopes about romance. Furthermore, the fairy-

tale will capture the cultural script, thus producing a narrative expression of the culture in the form of a story. The purpose of this study was to examine the effects fairy-tales have on females' intimate relationship patterns while exploring the perceived reality of women, their lived experiences surrounding relationships with men, and the personal meaning of those experiences. Moreover, the element of desire turning into a reality may not lend itself toward maintaining a relationship once one is "rescued" unless the projection is withdrawn and the woman sees the man for who he really is. Desire is not a negative element. Desire is only negative when there is no reciprocity and growth within the relationship itself, or when it is constantly projected onto object after object (person).

Expanding upon the concept of romantic love and fairy-tales Jung (1954) incorporated the elements of the Contra-sexual, Anima, and Animus to further explain unconscious processes and the Shadow. Incorporating Jung's (1954) concepts and applying them to the female psyche specifically may provide another view of how a person interprets their internal and external worlds. Understanding that everyone has an opposite within (Contra-sexual), a masculine side (Animus), and a feminine side (Anima) depending upon gender identification may contribute to unlocking unconscious material that is driving one's actions, desires, and thoughts. Furthermore, understanding the concepts of the Shadow, Anima, and Animus and how they play a role in conditioning one's experience in relation to the intimate relationship could help bring emotional and psychological insight to one's consciousness.

In summary, studying fairy-tales for the purposes of examining women's intimate relationships may assist in understanding how women internalize romanticized notions from the stories that were told to them at a young age. Further research in exploring fairy-tales and how they may influence a female's beliefs about romantic love and marriage is warranted. Thus, the

purpose of this study was to deepen our understanding of the way in which romantic fairy-tales contribute to meaning making and expectations for romantic partnerships in adult women. While generalizations cannot be made to the larger population, insight was gained from the group of women studied and their resulting narratives. The themes in the narratives of the women studied, while not necessarily applicable to women at large, serve to augment how clinicians may prime themselves to recognize particular patterns and themes that may emerge in their female clients' lives and how they may approach these themes in the therapeutic encounter. These systems appear to function regardless of the gender identification of the individual; whether heterosexual or homosexual or bisexual. However, for the purposes of this study, only heterosexual women's narratives were explored.

This research has increased the pool of data for future researchers to utilize and served to expand the current knowledge on this subject. The clinical uses of fairy-tales and myth have merit in terms of deepening the understanding of the lived experiences of women in relationships.

Of note I would like at this point, to expand upon my personal and professional experiences of why I chose the topic of fairy-tales and women's intimate relationships. To start, my personal experience with fairy-tales was never a negative affair. When I was young, I enjoyed watching fairy-tales and this is where my imagination and wonderment of what adulthood may look like began. I feel that a majority of young girls fantasize about a prince coming to rescue them and sweep them away to a magical land. I feel this is a powerful image. Entering adulthood, many of my friends and even some family members would make reference to finding a prince charming to come and rescue them. Around this time the media had a resurgence of the fairy-tale theme with movie releases such as Snow White and the Huntsman,



Red Riding Hood, and multiple variations of the Cinderella story. In addition to movies, dramas such as Grimm and Once Upon A Time were also new favorites to the Sunday night television lineup. It seemed, our society was becoming fairy-tale obsessed and I had to wonder why? This is where my fascination with the fairy-tale motif began, and I felt it would make for an interesting dissertation topic. Professionally, fairy-tales and women's intimate relationships are rarely seen, if ever, within forensic placements. Interestingly though, working with the chronically mentally ill, especially those who suffer from active psychosis, the patients imagination may be seen as fantasy, resembling a fairy-tale story. von Franz (1993) stated, "In a certain type of schizophrenia there is an enormous fantasy production in the unconscious and an impoverishment in consciousness of thinking, emotion, or affect" (p. 21). Within my current internship, the closest thing that relates to the topic of fairy-tales is the unconscious manifestations that the patients experience. With that said the study of unconscious processes impacted by cultural stories in the form of fairy-tales and in the context of women's expectations for romantic partnership was compelling enough to me to form a dissertation around such.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

This chapter begins by discussing the etiology and construction of the fairy-tale through Biechonski's (2005) theoretical lens and within a cultural context. Of specific interest is the way in which the female psyche absorbs content from both fairy-tales and the literal representation of idealized images in the media regarding romanticized love. Delving into considerations of unconscious processes, Jung's (1954) concepts of the Shadow, Anima, and Animus serve to enrich our understanding of a woman's interpretations of her internal and external experience in the context of the intimate relationship. Hillman's (1974) theoretical reflections of archetypal concepts further expand the notion of the Anima, Animus, and Shadow; particularly concerning how one's relationship to the archetypal content of the unconscious may condition the nature of one's experience and how this affects identity development and the capacity for authentic intimacy. Marie-Louise von Franz (1990, 1993, & 1996) researched and discussed a myriad of interpretations related to the fairy-tale. Her seminal work in the area of fairy-tale, the feminine within the fairy-tale, and individuation is discussed. This literature review closes with a discussion of the reading of fairy-tale within a psychotherapeutic context and how this may provide a unique approach in which to bring insight to that which may have been hidden from a woman's conscious awareness. The following discussions provide a framework for the focus of this qualitative study that seeks to understand how romantic fairy-tale themes may affect the way in which women perceive their role and the role of their partner in intimate relationships, as well as the meaning making process that occurs in the context of the female identity development.

### **Fairy-Tale**

Myths, fables, folk-tales, legends, and fairy-tales represent all the elements of the human condition that are both personal to the individual, but more importantly universal in their

meaning. Throughout history, our ancestors have passed down stories to their children and grandchildren that incorporate some element of fantasy and enchantment entwined within the story's words and imagery. These stories spread by word-of-mouth for thousands of years before they were recorded in written form. The purpose behind recording these stories was to preserve typical life experiences of cultural significance. Today, folk stories have been transformed from frightening, unfortunate circumstances to tales of a magical world where "happily-ever-after" is the norm (Le Guernic, 2004). Many folk stories do share an "unhappy ending," whereas the fairy-tale guarantees a "happily-ever-after" in its ending (Bettelheim, 1976). There are four common elements within the fairy-tale: first, it is a narrative, usually created anonymously, which is told and retold orally from one group to another across generations and centuries; second, it is a form of education, entertainment, and history; third, it could end with a lesson in morality, cultural values, and social requirements; and, fourth, it is a story that addresses current issues as each teller revises the story, continually making it relevant to the audience and time/place in which it is told (Biechonski, 2005).

Although traditional stories contain common elements, they can also be broken down into five distinct categories, including:

1. "Folktales," which are fictional stories dealing with human relationships, morality, conflicts, human problems, and solutions; for example, Babe the Blue Ox.
2. "Fairy-tales," which are stories of fantasy adapted from folk stories some (but not all) of which are designed to amuse children; for example, Cinderella.
3. "Myths," which are stories explaining the origin of the world and dealing with cosmic issues such as the earth and sky, heaven and hell, gods, goddesses, and human beings are typically pessimistic stories that usually end in tragedy; for example, Hans Christian Anderson's "The

Little Match Girl” (Bettelheim, 1976). Myths are often regarded as true by members of the group whose origin is being described.

4. “Legends,” which are stories relating incidents often thought to be true, including tales of historical figures, heroic exploits, supernatural beings, and “urban legends” about presumed current happenings; for example, Davey Crockett.

5. “Fables,” which are stories in which animals take on human roles and illustrate moral teachings; for example, The Ant and the Grasshopper (Biechonski, 2005).

The stories that we, as an American culture, tend to use are folk tales and fairy-tales.

In comparison to Biechonski’s (2005) description of myth, Tseelon (1995) found that, “a myth has taken seriousness to represent the truth, while folktales are understood to be make-believe” (p.1026). In addition, Vaz da Silva (2010) found that the meaning of fairy-tales is fairly well established despite various terminological fluctuations. Nearly all folklorists would agree that wonder tales, also referred to as magic tales, fairy-tales, or *Marchen*, “involved a shift into enchantment and the otherworld, followed by a subsequent return to the mundane world” (Vaz da Silva, 2010, p. 407). For instance, Sleeping Beauty is about a girl who falls into an enchanted sleep and can only be awakened by her Prince. Once awakened, Sleeping Beauty and her Prince return to the castle and, in essence, back to the mundane world. In addition to Sleeping Beauty, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs also shifts from enchantment back to the mundane. The story of Snow White follows a girl through her younger life of being envied by her stepmother, resulting in Snow White leaving her home and finding refuge with seven dwarves. During this time, she keeps house for the dwarves (mundane world) where one day she eats a magical apple and falls into a deep sleep (enchanted world). Only after love’s first kiss does Snow White awaken (enchanted world) and go to live with her prince (mundane world). Furthermore, “all

fairy-tales follow a pattern of fall and rise, while fairy-tales hinge on the initiation pattern of a fall into enchantment/death as a means for rebirth into a higher sphere of life” (Vaz da Silva, 2010, p. 409). For instance, this is seen in the story of Cinderella. Her station in life was to be a housemaid for her stepmother and stepsisters. This is the fall. Her rise in life begins when she marries her Prince. Hence, Cinderella’s station in life improved throughout the story, ending in her rebirth, and resultant higher sphere of life.

For the purposes of this study, the researcher used Biechonski’s (2005) definition of the fairy-tale. Biechonski (2005) stated,

A fairy-tale is a story that has four common elements; a folk story is a narrative, usually created anonymously, which is told and retold orally from one group to another across generations and centuries, a form of education, entertainment, and history, a lesson in morality, cultural values, and social requirements, and lastly, a story which addresses current issues as each teller revises the story, making it relevant to the audience and time/place in which it is told. (p. 95)

Using Biechonski’s (2005) definition as the backdrop to the current research provides the reader with a larger scope of the components of a fairy-tale, in addition to the cultural and social ideologies that were present during the time when the fairy-tale was created.

Over the past decade there has been a rise in the desire for achieving a fairy-tale life (Zipes, 2006). This includes, but is not limited to, romance, wealth, beauty, and luxury (Zipes, 2006). During this time, the desire for a fairy-tale life may be a reflection of the collective unconscious of the American culture. Society as well as the personal psyche, may gain a resurgence of hope and optimism in terms of romance and relationship that parallels the image of

the fairy-tale life. This pervasiveness for the hope of a fairy-tale life has entrenched our society to the point where many magazine covers use the phrase “fairy-tale life,” and televised events packaged as a real fairy-tale come to life experience, such as the marriage of Prince William and Princess Kate, are spread across media venues. Furthermore, the entertainment industry perpetuates this type of thinking by producing films such as *Pretty Woman*, *Kate and Leopold*, and *The Notebook*, among others to illustrate “happily-ever-after” endings. Romance novels make up another medium that pulls women into an imaginary shift of enchantment where the male is dominant, eventually rescuing the submissive woman from her dull life. With this type of societal message permeating a person’s psyche beginning in early childhood, it is not surprising that many heterosexual women develop certain expectations in the realm of romance and intimacy and, unbeknownst to them, try to make a fairy-tale out of their lives (Zipes, 2006). Women may take these manufactured images of the fairy-tale at face value. Instead they should step back and question the deeper meaning of the story. This dissertation will provide a window from which to glimpse how the societal focus on fairy-tale idealizations of a mythical, magical life affects a female’s intimate relationship patterns.

## **Culture**

By growing up in an American culture that seems to glamorize and over use the phrase “fairy-tale,” one may internalize an unhealthy view that intimate relationships should mirror the fantastical fairy-tales from one’s youth. It has been said that romantic love is one of the defining sentiments of American culture, (Vannini, 2004). According to Jordan and De Caro (1986), “folklore responds to what is going on generally in our culture... that folklore is used to condition women to accept certain attitudes and sex roles” (p. 507). *Snow White*, for example, is a fairy-tale that portrays women to accept certain societal attitudes. *Snow White* leaves home,

finds refuge with the dwarves, keeps house, falls into an enchanted sleep, and is rescued by a prince. These elements condition women to remain in the home and, if patient, one day a prince will rescue them from their monotonous everyday routine. Explored from a metaphorical perspective, one can come to understand that fairy-tales are rich avenues for exploring the keeping of one's own internal "house" and integrating the opposites (masculine/feminine, assertive/passive) of oneself in the process of individuation (Jung, 1954). However, psychological research tells us that most people, not only children, follow the representational heuristic and accept stories at face value in a literal way (Zipes, 2006). Being exposed to the literalization of folklore and fairy-tales at an early age may certainly have an impact on how women shape their own lives. Furthermore, Jordan and De Caro (1986) found the following,

Fairy-tales promote unhealthy sex stereotypes. They teach girls to 'play dead across the path of some young man who has been led to believe that he rules the world.' They glorify passivity, dependency and self-sacrifice as a heroine's cardinal virtues, promote a 'theme that is the inferior position of women; teach that girls win the prize if they are the fairest of them all, boys win if they are bold, active, and lucky. They acculturate girls to certain conventional roles such as dependency on males and traditional marriage, deal with females as property to be bestowed, and treat older women as wicked stepmothers and hags to be feared. (p. 508)

Many popular fairy-tales including; Cinderella, Snow White, and Sleeping Beauty, promote unhealthy sex and gender stereotypes. These particular fairy-tales share common elements such as revenge, patriarchy, and passivity. Psychologically, the roles being portrayed by the heroine

may seep into the female psyche leading to dependency and unhealthy beliefs. Unhealthy beliefs such as passivity and dependency may lead to negative psychological manifestations and unhappy relationships. This passivity and dependency could be seen as archetypal in nature.

On the other hand, many women are fulfilled by leading a domesticated lifestyle while being dependent on men. With this said, not all dependency is negative. This so-called conventional role works well for many women, and is what many women seek. This, in essence, is their fairy-tale. The conventional role of dependency could be viewed as a literal interpretation of the fairy-tale. This may represent an undeveloped sense of self leading to dependency or passivity. Conversely, a mature understanding of the fairy-tale is viewed through the metaphors within the story to describe the alchemical process of individuation through the process of opposites such as the rational and irrational; yin and yang; order and chaos; and the superior and the inferior (Jung, 1959). According to Jung (1949), it is necessary to accept the opposites within each of us. This acceptance gives an individual a sense of 'unity' and acceptance of life as it is, and not as one might think one wants life to be.

There are still some subtle forms of patriarchy within the modern world that women may not be conscious of; for example, bearing their husbands last name (Johnson, 1989). The patriarchal mentality of our society comes at the expense of the female where the male is "ruler" and the female is "servant." For example, fairy-tales depict marriage as the female's only option out of their current life circumstance, which limits the female's vision for her own life to the home and nursery, thereby perpetuating a patriarchal status quo (Rowe, 1979). Moreover, de Beauvoir (1949) noted many women come to see themselves through the eyes of the other. Ussher (1997) stated, "women long to be gazed at in adoration and desire and to find a 'superior prince charming' who they can depend upon and who will continually look at them in such a



way, as reflected in ever-popular fairy-tales” (p. 207). Many women may fall unknowingly into relationships where this paradigm is played out. The female may become disenchanted with this world and demand a change thereby provoking both the male and female inner and outer worlds to erupt, resulting in chaos within the relationship. As a result, subtle suffering and loneliness will settle into the unconscious psyche of the woman which may produce more pain (Johnson 1993). The pain and suffering could manifest into a depression or anxiety disorder (Whisman & Baucom, 2012). For example, in the beginnings of a relationship some women may placate or downplay their own needs to satisfy their partner. This could be an unconscious ongoing characteristic of the female, who may be trying to secure a committed relationship. If the dynamics within the relationship become disenchanting, each partner may want change resulting in possible confusion, disillusionment, and anger. High emotions will then be played out within the relationship possibly resulting in chaos and pain (Whisman & Baucom, 2012; Johnson, 1993). The pain and chaos could be seen as the man and woman not being able to tolerate their inner opposites, their Anima and Animus.

Some mythology may also show how the female plays a passive, inferior role. Take for example Eros, the god of love. He insists that his wife, Psyche, never ask any questions and never to look at him (Johnson, 1989). His attitude toward marriage is that, “it should be there for him at home, but it should not be an encumbrance” (Johnson, 1989, p. 20). Psychologically Eros may not be able to tolerate the love of Psyche, resulting in his insistence that she not look at him and that marriage should be available for him, on his terms, not hers. By doing this Eros controls the relationship and this is where he is comfortable. He will not give up control to his wife and he refuses to show vulnerability. These troubling views of females being portrayed in such a negative light may infiltrate the unconscious of the female child, which will be carried over into

the adult narrative. In addition, this will shape how females present themselves and behave in a social and cultural context.

In comparison to the patriarchal view within fairy-tales, Severin (2003) examined fairy-tales and their cultural impact on American society and found that,

...the resentment of this narrowing of women's choices to marriage, as well as the price exacted on women who refused to follow cultural dictates, does place women in a negative stance compared to their counterparts who are getting married, sustaining long term relationships, and staying in that 'domesticity' lifestyle. (p. 204)

Furthermore, Giroux (1992) researched Disney and the effects that this enterprise has on our culture. According to Giroux (1992), "capitalizing on its inroads into popular culture, Disney generates representations that secure images, desires, and identifications through which audiences come to produce themselves and their relationships to others" (p. 86). This phenomenon, if internalized by the general female population, may also become propagated by older females in the younger female's life therefore, if the mother or sister shares these representations, they may inadvertently teach the younger female generations these unconscious, desires. These desires may exist because, within American culture beliefs and stories are ingrained within one's family and society. The beliefs and stories are due, in part, to the collective consciousness of what is happening during that time. For example, the media often depicts romance as something that is easy to obtain and sometimes glamorous. However, this has little to do with what is actually going on inside the relationship. The media's stories become a part of American culture because media is widespread and far-reaching and has an impact on

how people live or think. Because of this, women may want to stay within the enchanted realm of falling in love. When the relationship becomes too real women become disappointed because the stories never speak of ordinary love, only falling in love (Johnson, 1989). Being aware of the circulating cultural understandings and expectations that surround gender and relationships is important because these perceptions unknowingly create meaning in the lives of women and men (Barker, 2011).

Phil Goss (2011) a post-Jungian analyst, illustrates Johnson's (1989) point by using the archetypal features of human development, puer and puella, to explain relationship complexities. Puer is the 'external boy' and puella is the 'external girl' who never wants to grow up. According to Goss (2011), puer and puella are, "reflected in behaviors or fantasies which are unrealistic, overly idealistic, naïve or avoidant" (p. 94). American culture and familial ideologies may add to the relational complexities in so far as providing a distorted view of relational bonds between a man and a woman. To illustrate this dynamic, psychologically, men may hold certain attitudes or perceptions pertaining to women and women may hold certain attitudes or perceptions regarding men. In the absence of personal reflection and psychological growth these views may, in turn, become rigidified (Goss, 2011). This rigidity could be seen as a dependent woman (puella) and a self-serving man (puer) whose dependency and self-centeredness keep them from seeking wholeness because, possibly within the family, there was a distortion between the attachment bond of infant and parent (Goss, 2011). Puer and puella may also be viewed within the characters of stories such as the cruel, thieving uncle or the dependent stepsisters searching for a man to take care of them. The literalization of these representations within the story may distort a woman's belief that all relationships are modeled in this way. Metaphorically, the story may illustrate the broken familial connection and bond between the characters that may

result in a disruption within the attachment process. This disruption can produce the puer and puella archetypes to be a major influencing force in one's life. Possibly the individual lacked a secure, attached upbringing and may perpetually seek the magical union of the idealized mother or father in the romanticized "other," only to be disappointed when the "other" turns out to be less than perfect.

In contrast to American culture, Asian culture does not have the tradition of falling in love. Traditionally, the individuals have gone into their relationships quietly and un-dramatically. Their marriages have been arranged by their parents. These individuals' lives are untouched by Eros (Johnson, 1989). Another traditional culture is the Iranian culture. Hanassab and Tidwell (1996) studied Iranian women who emigrated from Iran to Los Angeles. Characteristics found within a traditional Iranian culture include a patrilineal, patriarchal view based on male supremacy. Starting in childhood many Iranian children are socialized to a double standard regarding gender and male dominance. Traditionally girls are taught to speak and laugh rarely, to be innocent and beautiful, obedient, and to become good wives and mothers (Hanassab & Tidwell, 1996). Furthermore, Hanassab & Tidwell (1996) found contrasting views between "American" values and traditional Iranian values in relation to attitudes toward dating the opposite sex, intimate relationships, and gender roles. Iranian women felt more freedom in Los Angeles compared to living in Iran. For example women held less traditional ideals concerning the role of women. Being exposed to American ideals has led to Iranian women asking for egalitarian equity within their relationships (Hanassab & Tidwell, 1996).

In comparison to the Hanassab and Tidwell study, Koutrelakos (2004) studied Greek-Americans and how acculturation influenced their behavior, preferences, and values within intimate or romantic relationships. The results show that Greek-Americans as compared to

indigenous Greeks disagreed more with low self-disclosure in intimate relationships, but did not differ from each other in how strongly they advocated sacrificing the self to meet the needs of the other person. In contrast, Greek-Americans did not differ from Americans in their disagreement with low self-disclosure in their relationships, but endorsed sacrificing the self to meet the others needs at a higher level than did the Americans (Koutrelakos, 2004). Within the Greek culture, Koutrelakos (2004) found that, “low self disclosure has been found to be associated with maintaining distance, compulsive self-reliance, and angry withdrawal within relationships to protect autonomy. This is seen more within the Greek culture versus the American culture” (p. 103). Contrasting Asian, Iranian, and Greek cultures to American culture shows how beliefs about intimate relationships and egalitarian ideals differ and how acculturation into American culture can change one’s belief around intimate and romantic relationships. Stories, American views on intimate relationships, and the media may influence these beliefs.

In comparison to the fairy-tale, Harrington and Bielby (1991) studied soap operas and how their representation of intimacy and romantic love is portrayed. In general, soap operas reflect norms and mores about a woman’s place in the social world. Life commitments to long-term intimate relationships may be declining. Conversely, fictional relationships have achieved a complex form beyond the traditional relationship. What is found in the analysis of fictional romantic couples is a novel idea of love, a heterosexual love that incorporates elements of both traditional masculine and feminine love while simultaneously incorporating the elements of intimacy, trust, and commitment, which has been long held as essential to love in American culture (Harrington & Bielby, 1991). Although this research was conducted with soap operas, it has the same essence of a fairy-tale incorporating the gender stereotypic aspects of both stories

and the mirroring of what is happening within one's culture and society at the time the story is written. Interestingly, most of the stories told revolve around "true love" and explanations about how to obtain it, but not how to keep and maintain it. Take, for example, the popular daytime soap opera *All My Children*. This soap opera illustrates how women and men fall in love easily, marry, and then divorce. It rarely shows the inner workings of a relationship, only the beginning, the courtship phase, and the ending. The rest is left to the imagination. Many soap operas have the same essence when it comes to story lines. This essence may also be seen within many fairy-tales. Harrington and Bielby (1991) stated, that Americans have "a belief that love as life-long commitment, trust, and sacrifice between two people is still very much alive in our culture" (p. 131). Although this belief is "alive" within our culture, the expectations and roles of women within these relationships are less than egalitarian. Research has found that women's roles have expanded, but the dynamics of male-female intimate relationships have changed very little, (Harrington & Bielby, 1991). Furthermore, although perhaps "the 'ideal' of intimacy is becoming more egalitarian, many of the traditional patterns are upheld in actual practice" (Harrington & Bielby, 1991 p. 142).

Feminist theorists Jacques and Radtke (2012) studied women who were enrolled in a graduate program and asked them questions pertaining to womanhood and identity within relationships. The authors found that for many of these women they did not resist traditional notions of womanhood such as taking a more active role in child-rearing while at the same time slowing down on their own career paths and goals for the sake of the family, thus perpetuating the non-egalitarian, patriarchal views of society. Perhaps American culture does not want to view intimacy as egalitarian because it has not fully accepted that women can and do obtain more power than their partners; whether that be at home, work, or social spheres. There may always be

an underlying view that women will always be a step beneath their partner. The 'ideal' of intimacy is still hinged on fantasy. In reality, however, women are still propagating traditional roles such as being submissive toward their partner (Rowe, 1979). Johnson (1983) stated, "our culture trains women that their role is not to be human beings, but to be mirrors who reflect back to a man his ideal or his fantasy" (p. 109). For example, a man may fantasize about a specific image he is searching for in a partner. If the partner does not exhibit this fantasy, because she is a real person not a mythological figure, the man may become indifferent to her and seek out another who will reflect this idealized version from myth. This type of literal viewpoint from the fairy-tale story becomes problematic because the female is upheld to a fantasized myth which will impact her relationship with that partner. On the other hand, one needs to ask if being submissive, at times, is psychologically empowering. Strong relationships will provide room for compromising, yielding, and reciprocity. Both partners share responsibility for making the relationship work and sometimes each partner has to yield to the other. Knowing when and how to do this is a good basis for a long-term relationship.

With attention focused on romance and intimacy, culture and present day contemporary ideals and ethics will play a role in how fairy-tales and other stories are comprised, told, and retold as generations are exposed to that culture's own representations of love and relationships. According to Carpenter (1998), "cultural scenarios are created and maintained by many diverse components of group life, including schools and educators, religious doctrine and leaders, folklore, sex researchers, and mass media" (p. 158). For this reason, individuals may want to reflect upon their own role and ideals pertaining to relationship and love.

## Media and Entertainment

It would be a heroic accomplishment to avoid being impacted by the perpetuation of idealized romance in the media. Films, television, magazines, and novels are the current avenues for cultural storytelling. The media permeates the American psyche. Utilizing magazine covers with titles such as, “She’s living the fairy-tale,” or “Has she finally found her prince charming?” could unconsciously compel a woman to, albeit naively, feel justified in seeking out her own fairy-tale or prince. Not fully realizing that one must be careful not to place emphasis on the “fantasy of the fairy-tale,” for example, imagining a relationship that is always happy, with no negative aspects. Many couples are living their own fairy-tale, of sorts; with one the difference; the couple are conscious of the other aspects that come into play when in an adult, mature, intimate relationship. When the excitement ends and the relationship becomes real, that is everyday life situations must be attended to, many couples may realize they want something else or that the relationship did not hold up to their idealization of how it should be. However, the emotionally mature couple will often work through these disillusionments and come to a more distinctly genuine place in the context of what it means to be intimate. Psychological effects of mass communication on people’s thoughts and behavior are pervasive within American society and how this plays a role in women’s relationship patterns maybe evident from how women behave and construct their relationships based upon this mirage of what intimacy and love should look like (Bonds- Raacke, 2006). The behavior and thinking that is related to intimate relationships may have evolved over time due to the collective consciousness that media represents and the collective unconscious as it unfolds. These patterns may then be played out repeatedly with each relationship mimicking the last.



Many children are exposed to Disney fairy-tales and absorb their contexts, not fully understanding the actual message being conveyed about women and relationships. The themes and images stay with us because of the way they evoke the imagination with bright colors and sing-along songs with a happy uplifting beat and, more importantly, a happily-ever-after ending. Moreover, the stories' themes also stay with the child because they capture what it is like to be human when dealing with the conflict between love and hate, male and female surrendering and withdrawing from each other. Metaphorically, the fairy-tale assists the child in understanding himself, the story helps to guide the child to find solutions to problems that upset him (Bettelheim, 1976). The fall and rise within the story teaches the child the intricacies of relationships and show the multiple levels of romance and intimacy played out throughout the story.

Identification with the heroine plays a role in early socialization to the fairy-tale image. For example, Leadbetter and Wilson (1993) stated,

... There is a whole secondary market of fairy-tale things such as; dress-up clothes, pajamas, pencils, erasers, towels, coloring books, umbrellas, bed sheets, place mats, cups, paper plates, pencils, wrapping paper etc. that exists to support a child's identification with important fairy-tale heroines. (p. 469)

For the young girl growing into adulthood, holding onto these types of images is a phenomenon that often brings the woman to the psychotherapist's office. Developing a secure sense of self seems paramount today if one wants to find a healthy relationship versus holding onto a childhood dream of wonderland and sing-along songs. There are concerns about media and marketing strategies becoming even more intense (Ledbetter & Wilson, 1993).

In comparison to Ledbetter and Wilson's (1993) research which found a secondary market of fairy-tale items propagated through the media which led to an early socialization of the fairy-tale image, Shapiro and Kroeger (1991) looked at the relationship between intimate relationships and the popular media and found the following: "cultural myths, marketed by Madison Avenue and other media-linked purveyors of popular beliefs, play a major role in socializing people into specific irrationalities regarding relationship." The authors further stated, "That individuals who are more exposed to the popular romantic media will have more dysfunctional/ unrealistic beliefs about intimate relationships" (p. 233). Yearning for a 'fairy-tale' ending may also exacerbate this skewed thinking. Psychologically, the aspect of yearning is a continuous search for security and love, as seen within the romantic stories. The main characters are searching, albeit metaphorically, for their own contentment and security within one's self, not through the other. Furthermore, Tanner, Haddock, Schindler- Zimmerman, and Lund (2003) researched images of couples and families in Disney movies and found the following theme,

A majority of couples fall in love at first sight and 'live happily-ever-after.' These images encourage an expectation for relationships that is unrealistic, as couples do not tend to live happily-ever-after without effort from both partners. Images of love at first sight in the films encourage the belief that physical appearance is the most important thing when entering an intimate relationship. (p. 368)

In the beginning of the relationship physical appearance could aid in the initiation of attraction prompting a feeling of love, romance, and intimacy (Luo & Zhang, 2009). The female may internalize these feelings and sensations as true love, which it may be, but if the relationship ends

the female may attempt to find another partner who mirrored the last, which will start the pattern all over again. Psychologically, this pattern could produce a neurotic state within the female, leaving her unfulfilled and searching for a variation of intimacy that is only superficial. Jung (1954) would say that the woman is experiencing a disturbed state of consciousness. Until a secure attachment forms, the female may play out this pattern repeatedly with different partners. The attachment could form either through a nurturing psychotherapeutic relationship that models a secure attachment or by working things out through a long-term relationship rather than leaving (Feeney & Van Vleet, 2010).

Similarly, Stone (1975) researched Disney fairy-tales and interviewed women about their favorite films and the messages that they took away from these stories. According to Stone (1975), “many admitted that they were certainly influenced by their readings of fairy-tales. Some of the women had openly admired the lovely princess and hoped to imitate them, especially their ability to obtain a man and a suburban castle without much effort” (p. 48). These women who openly admired the princess recognized the image in various forms of popular entertainment; most notably the romantic tales of television, in comic books, magazines, and novels read exclusively by women (Stone, 1975). Favorable images of women in fairy-tales or myths create an underlying attraction toward this desire that is not based in reality, but based on subjective psychological reality. The image that the woman has in her mind exists only in her mind which, if left unexamined, may result in conflict within the relationship. For example, holding onto a literal representation of how relationships should look, is what the woman is focusing on within the romantic stories versus what the metaphor within the story is actually relating. The story is not about the relationship between the two main characters, but rather is a metaphor about how

one view themselves in relation to the people within their lives and how to navigate the intricacies of the developing self (von Franz, 1993).

Moreover, Dubino (1993) found that, “from childhood on, women and men are bombarded by stereotyped representations that are not just contained between the pages of romance fiction; they proliferate in all popular media” (p. 106). Because of this bombardment starting at an early age, women may not be able to distinguish what is real intimacy versus the imagined intimacy that they see in movies, read about in books, or fantasize. Millions of women world-wide may turn to romances in a vicarious attempt to compensate for their lack of attention or validation that they want or crave in their own lives (Dubino, 1993). This craving for romance and intimate relationships can be replayed within the minds of many women. By using their imagination, they are able to recreate the magical stage of the courtship. Imagination is defined as, “an act or power of forming a mental image; creative ability” (Merriam- Webster’s Pocket Dictionary, 2006, p. 170). Imagination and escapism are two coping skills that are useful when one is experiencing pain or loss. Imagination allows the individual to escape reality for a moment and travel to another place they created that is safe and happy. For instance, some women who read stories that focus on romance may project themselves onto the heroine within the story resulting in the women imagining themselves at the center of the “heroes” life, resulting in a belief that men are able to satisfy women’s needs fully which reinforces a patriarchal ideology (Dubino, 1993). Furthermore, Dubino (1993) stated, “for many women, this (the magical stage of courtship) is one of the most exciting and important times of their lives; no wonder they want to experience it imaginarily over and over again” (p. 108).

Adding to the bombardment aspect, the imagination within women can grow greater depending upon the amount of exposure a female receives in the form of romanticized love

through the media. Combining all these attributes from an early age can contribute to a distorted view of what intimacy is and how intimacy is obtained. Alternately, an undistorted view of intimacy will contribute to the healthy aspect of a relationship. This is obtained when both partners work hard in the relationship and are not overly concerned with how others perceive their relationship, but how they subjectively perceive their own partnership in an informed and mature way.

In summary to what has been discussed above, Carpenter (1998) found that, “discussions of fantasy life and crushes underlined the ever present possibility that relationships might fall short of lofty ideals” (p. 166). These lofty ideals are played out every day in movies, books, storytelling, reality television and print advertisements which may result in failed relationships because the partner is not living up to the female’s internalized idealization of how she perceives the relationship to be, not what it actually is. The media takes on the role as a collective ego that directs perception and mediates between reality and fantasy. This, in turn, may outline rules that individuals are internalizing that govern expression and role definition. Furthermore, Punyanunt-Carter (2006) also discussed the messages that mass media conveys to women regarding relationships. Within this research, the author found mass media images depicting unrealistic ideals and beliefs around romantic relationships which are seen in television, film, and advertisements affecting children’s perception of romance. Of note, the mass media images reinforce the association of romance with excessive and/or grandiose expectations about relationships, which children are absorbing and believing that this is the norm for intimate relationships (Punyanunt-Carter, 2006). The research presented here depicted how children are affected by lofty ideals of romance that will carry over into their adult narratives and adult expectations that love is everlasting, always true, and is never negative or unhealthy. Lastly,

Punyanunt- Carter (2006) found that what we see on television does affect us regardless of content. This effect may result in an unconscious form and it may play out in a blatantly, unhealthy way. In effect, this is the method by which the unconscious informs the developmental process thereby structuring ego identity.

### **Females Intimate Relationships**

The mother-infant bond is where an individual will first learn about love. Attachment theory's basic premise is that early experiences with caregivers will affect one's functioning in later (romantic) relationships (Bowlby, 1969). Bowlby and Ainsworth described four attachment styles, namely: securely attached; anxious ambivalent; avoidant; and disorganized attachment. Securely attached babies typically have parents who respond to their needs in a positive, compassionate way resulting in interpersonal trust and comfort with intimacy (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978). These securely attached babies feel reassured by the mother/caregiver and use the mother/caregiver as a secure base to explore the world. This is in contrast to, for instance, the anxious/ambivalent child who forms an insecure attachment to the mother/caregiver. Anxious/ambivalent children have high levels of anxiety and stress even in the presence of the mother. Babies with an avoidant attachment style will actively avoid or ignore their mothers and they appear unemotional during separation and reunion. Finally, the disorganized-disoriented baby shows signs of unusual behaviors such as rocking on their hands and knees, putting their heads on the wall when frightened, and freezing all movement with arms in the air in a trance-like expression (Broderick & Blewitt, 2006). Psychologically, individuals start their lives pre-disposed to certain love/attachment styles which may become ingrained into how they behave and think. This, in turn, will carry over into their own attachment style with their adult partner. For example, if an individual's first bond is a secure attachment and this

attachment is cultivated throughout one's life, the chance that they find a partner who also exhibits a secure attachment style is high, resulting in a healthy relationship. Conversely, if an individual's first bond is an insecure attachment, this individual might be more prone to attracting an unhealthy romantic partnership because of the insecurities that manifested in early childhood. These individuals may always seek out and demand security, but they are seeking it from individuals who are unlikely or unable to produce a secure environment. With this said, attachment style and longing for a fairy-tale partnership could prove to be either detrimental or positive depending upon the style in which one was reared in, the formation of ego identity, and the behavioral patterns the individual exhibits.

A related concept is how one's script or inner narrative begins in early childhood and is carried through into adulthood. Some scripts may morph and change over time, while others may stay stagnant from childhood. Early story telling such as the fairy-tale inform life scripts, romantic scripts, and courtship scripts (Le Guernic, 2004; Rose 1985). The majority of the discussion above centered on how fairy-tales can contribute to the creation of unrealistic life scripts depending on how they are internalized and how attachment styles may impact such. There are occasions where fairy-tales may also serve a compensatory purpose. The adventures of the young girl searching for love, rebirth, or refuge from an unhealthy home life may be offered as an example. To illustrate this point clearer briefly analyzing The Brothers Grimm version of Snow White provides the reader with a better understanding of attachment and how attachment is the springboard for how one will develop into the person they are today, in real life. This encompasses how one behaves, thinks, and feels about themselves, as well as the individuals in their life. Briefly, the story of Snow White is about a young pre-adolescent girl, who was so beautiful her (narcissistic) stepmother had her banished from the kingdom because of the step-

mother's own insecurities. According to Bettelheim (1976), if the same-sex caring parent is not strong enough to bridge important, positive ties within the child to that same-sex parent, then the child may become jealous, which will later dominate the child's emotional life. Furthermore, since the narcissistic stepmother is an unsuitable parent for any (real) child to identify with in a healthy, secure way, the child cannot help but be jealous of the mother figure and all the advantages and power that the mother exudes (Bettelheim, 1976). This attachment will then become a part of the child and, as the child matures, the attachment style will be carried from relationship to relationship.

The stepmother hires a hunter to destroy Snow White, so that she can remain the fairest of all. The hunter is the projection of the protected father figure that comes to rescue Snow White, not kill her (Bettelheim, 1976). In fairy-tales the father figures are usually seen as weak characters, while it is the stepmothers and witches that hold the power. Bettelheim (1976) explains this phenomenon as the following: within a traditional nuclear family, the father is the protector of the children and mother from outside dangers (Bettelheim, 1976). The mother is to provide a loving, caring environment for the child to ensure the child's survival and that basic needs are met. Therefore, within the fairy-tale, if the mother fails to provide this secure environment for the child, the child will be placed in danger. Furthermore, if the father is negligent and is not stopping the negative behaviors of the mother, then the child becomes neglected, unprotected. Snow White then has to fend for herself when she is abandoned by her father and the stepmother. Abandonment in real life will psychologically create a yearning within an individual, typically a female, for that secure attachment with the mother/father figure. The woman will search out the security and love repeatedly in every partner she has. This will be her



relationship pattern and if left untreated by a psychotherapist could manifest into a characterological disorder.

These images of the fairy-tale may manifest into what is called a life script (Le Guernic, 2004). Le Guernic (2004) found, “that the term ‘life script’ refers to the pathological aspects and ‘psychological life plan’ for the healthy, functional aspects of our personal identity. The stories in fairy-tales and myths are concerned with both aspects” (p. 216).

In developing one’s own script one must first identify, metaphorically within the fairy-tale, some aspect with which they connect. This could be identifying with the ugly stepsister, beautiful young princess, grieving a beloved mother, and so forth. Psychologically, if one is identifying with a negative aspect within the fairy-tale, the wicked stepmother for instance, the person may start to internalize this image and may behave in a way that confirms the negative aspect. On the other hand, if one is identifying with a positive aspect, such as the young princess, the individual may externalize qualities that are seen within the princess; such as submissiveness and a quiet demeanor. The rest is relegated to the unconscious Shadow. The negative and positive qualities could become pathological in that the individual is presenting in an inauthentic way. Presenting in a false way may lead to relationships being inauthentic which may lead to unhappiness, breakups, or chaos within the relationship. On the other hand, these aspects could manifest into a positive self-image of confidence and containment, leaving the individual with a healthy sense of self that will be reciprocated within the relationship. Tolerating the positive and negative aspects within one’s self leads to individuation (von Franz, 1990).

Experiencing these emotions at a young age will influence how a person starts to self identify, which would reflect their own scripts later in life through their own course of development. Thinking about fairy-tale roles and one’s own role in life, Propp (2004), found

seven specific roles that could feed into early childhood development and the adult's later identification. The roles may illustrate the archetype of what the reader is identifying with at that particular time, such as: the antagonist or aggressor; the giver; the auxiliary; the princess or her father; the mandateur (sets the story in motion by initiating a mission or journey); the hero; and, the false hero. Each of these roles has motivating factors within the story, for example, the hero's motivating factors behind the pursuit. In addition, other elements include physical survival (not being killed), economic survival (not starving to death), or psychological survival (escaping incest), which could be viewed as one's basic psychological needs. In addition, the stories could include finding a partner, beginning a family, discovering one's true identity, being loved for oneself, or the quest for power.

Depending upon the psychological development and identification of the individual, these roles may affect how one behaves and views their own world, for example, the Giver. Possibly the motivating factor of the Giver is to provide love and comfort. If this individual is in a relationship with someone who takes for granted the Giver's actions, the Giver may end the relationship and seek out another for whom she can care. The Giver then may constantly be searching for the one who will allow her to care for him and, until she does, her relationship patterns may all resemble each other. Furthermore, "for many individuals, a satisfying intimate relationship is the most important source of happiness and well-being" (Pielage, Luteijin, & Arrindell, 2005, p. 456). Conversely, distressing relationships could lead to major risk factors for developing psychopathology (Pielage et al, 2005). For example, individuals who exhibit insecure attachment styles may risk finding unsatisfactory intimate relationships which could increase one's vulnerability to the development of psychological and physical complaints (Pielage, et al.

2005). As Bowlby (1980) stated, “the psychology and psychopathology of emotion is found to be in large part the psychology and psychopathology of affectional bonds” (p. 40).

Searching for one’s own function or script in life is an on-going process fueled by stories that teach us how to act, live, and behave. Following and giving into these specific identifications at an early age may skew an adult’s self-identity and she may behave in ways that are incongruent with how she feels. Psychologically, these scripts may become detrimental for the future of some females if they are searching for a “happily-ever-after” because they may overly identify with the fairy-tale image and all the players whom reside within it; which could filter through into her relationships, unconsciously. A woman may want to stay in this realm when life then becomes too real and she may become disappointed. This is because the fairy-tales never speak of ordinary love, only falling in love. Over-identification in a literal way may create suffering because of the female’s beliefs, ideals, attitudes, and expectations of how a relationship should look. Johnson (1983) stated, “Women may have automatic assumptions about what a xi). These automatic assumptions are strewn throughout romantic stories for example, Cinderella. All the females within Cinderella become alive when the prince is present. In real life women may feel that when a male is present they should give him their full attention. By maintaining the superficiality within the relationship, women thereby neglect their own needs. Women may internalize then that this is what a normal relationship should look like.

All of these stories contain within them elements of encouragement and warnings about the dangers of archetypal forces (Le Guernic, 2004; von Franz, 1996; Jung, 1954). These elements play into and mold not just one’s own scripts, but also our impression of whom others may be. For example, for the adult listener these dangerous elements may represent death, physical or psychological injury, this is archetypal. The archetypal forces portray heroes and

heroines starting in a position of weakness who emerge through trials of victory (Le Guernic, 2004). This influence of searching for a specific role within one's self and the other may be seen at the unconscious level, which may play unknowingly into one's script. Karpman (1968) found that, "roles within an individual's favorite fairy-tale correspond with those in his or her script" (Le Guernic, 2004, p. 218). Furthermore, by utilizing Karpman's (1968) theory about the fairy-tale and the self he found that, "each character of element in the fairy-tale that the client has integrated says something about him or her. The client identifies with each character in turn or gives the character different roles in his or her history" (p. 218). Unconsciously, if the female is searching for a happily-ever-after and is identifying with a specific aspect within the fairy-tale, this behavior will influence her intimate relational patterns in that her own beliefs are reflecting her inner desires which might be influenced by myths.

Throughout life American culture teaches us how to be responsible and autonomous individuals. Some of us never achieve this. However, a majority of people become independent, healthy, and active participants in the world. They achieve individuation. Those who do not achieve a whole self are thought to act in "scripty behavior." In scripty behavior an individual may refuse to accept responsibility and lays fault on other people. This would be one's anima/animus being projected onto the other. Implied within scripty roles is a particular life position with regard to self, other people, and the world: I'm OK, you're not OK for the Persecutor; I'm OK, you're not OK for the rescuer; and I'm not OK, you're OK or I'm not OK and you're not OK for the victim. On the contrary, independent behaviors are manifested by an 'I'm OK, you're OK life position derived from an enlightened confidence in self, others, and the world (Le Guernic, 2004). By thinking about scripty behavior in these terms, one may think about personality characteristics and what type of personality is attracted to another and how certain

life scripts can lead individuals into certain relationship patterns. It is possible that more highly disturbed individuals will take away a more negative aspect in a fairy-tale and be drawn to more negative aspects of life, which ultimately leads to unhappy endings (Le Guernic, 2004).

Furthermore, “in life, as in fairy-tales, roles are continually swapped around; they are positive when they correspond to normal changes of position within the relationship but negative when they imply discounts or fixated stereotypes within relationships” (Le Guernic, 2004, p. 219-221).

Within relationships we bring forward certain aspects from our scripts: they are the sexual; romantic; and, courtship.

These aspects brought forth may influence how the relationship will proceed, either positively or negatively. Being aware of one’s own script entails becoming aware of who one is in relation to the other. For example, avoidant personalities may attract individuals who have unhealthy character-logical traits resulting in a relationship steeped in negativity. When this relationship ends the avoidant individual will again find another partner who resembles the last, resulting in a circular pattern of unhealthy intimate relationships. Peloquin, Lafontaine, and Brassard (2011) looked at romantic attachment, empathy, and aggression within couple’s relationships and found,

... Highly avoidant men and women are less likely to consider their partner’s perspective when an argument occurs in their relationship or to feel sympathy and express concern for their partner. This highlights avoidant individual’s lack of emotional closeness with their partners. (p. 931)

Many fairy-tales are built upon finding romance, finding the perfect prince, and maintaining chastity until the wedding night despite a woman’s sexual yearning. Rose (1985)

explored the sexual, romantic, and courtship scripts of women and how fairy-tales feed into our self-identity in regards to our intimate relationships. Rose (1985) stated, “among forces that shape desire in women and men are the scripts for relationships and sexual expression available in popular fiction, found in fairy-tales, romance novels, comic books, adventure stories and pornography” (p. 251). Being exposed to these elements of fiction at an early age reinforces stereotypes of how women should behave while in a relationship. It seeps into the unconscious and will eventually be played out in a behavioral script. As in a fairy-tale, in a real relationship all couples go through stages, starting with the courtship stage. In this stage the couple overcomes obstacles that bar them from their love and then finally ending in a commitment of “happily- ever-after.” Although the fairy-tale ends at this point, in reality, the relationship continues to have vicissitudes sometimes ending in “unhappily-ever-after.” This part is never shown in fairy-tales; therefore, it is no wonder that many women searching for a fairy-tale relationship come up short when their relationship does not mirror that of their beloved story. Impossible demands that are put on relationships will inevitably break the union apart. Johnson (1983) stated, “we actually believe unconsciously that this mortal human being has the responsibility for making our lives whole, keeping us happy, making our lives meaningful, intense, and ecstatic” (p. 61). From this idea one can see how women’s scripts on romantic love can be skewed by the image of the fairy-tale. According to Rose (1985), “the fairy-tale is the prototype for the romance script” (p. 252). The recovery from this fantasy experience for women may never be realized because of the disillusionment of the script.

With women in American culture growing increasingly independent and developing a sense of self that is both positive and healthy, identifying with a fairy-tale in which the young female waits patiently for her prince plays more into the ““doing”” aspect of a life script rather

than a “being” aspect of a life script (Rose, 1985). Rose (1985) found that, “because in the fairy-tale ‘being,’ or waiting passively, inevitably leads to sexual awakening, the groundwork has been laid for the erotization of waiting and anticipation that is fully realized in the adult romance script” (p. 252). Additionally, love is not a state of doing, but a state of being. It is a feeling of connection to another human being (Johnson, 1983). Johnson states, “love will be with us even after our projections, our illusions, and our artifices have all passed away” (1983, p. 190). Love, as an abstract notion, cannot be taken from someone, only refused by someone. The refusal of love is seen within all romantic tales, usually with the unhealthy, negative aspects of the self. Until an internal change occurs, the reversal of the refusal of one’s love cannot take place.

In contrast to Le Guernic (2004), who viewed fairy-tales as influences that lead to positive life scripts for women, Rose (1985) found certain elements within the fairy-tale romance script that are negative for women. For instance, Rose (1985) found that, “unappreciated feminine virtue, captivity, rescue, being, waiting, and open-mindedness to every suitor...encouragement of distance and superficiality between the sexes are manifested elements of the romance fairy-tale script” (p. 253). Identifying with these specific elements as a young child may play a role in later adult years when the young girl starts to date or become sexual. For example, if the young girl learns to be distant and superficial within the relationship, this behavior may carry-over into her adulthood. In adulthood she may develop an attitude toward relationships based on negativity, thus continuously searching for a relationship that is satisfying while subconsciously sabotaging the present relationship.

Because of the negative aspects, the young girl may also develop certain scripts about romance and intimate relationships between herself and others. Replacing these archetypal

factors of the fairy-tale script with more positive, healthy archetypal factors could help improve women's relationships, scripts, and their outlook on life in general. Furthermore, "the continuing appeal of the basic romance script speaks to its identification with basic female psychological concerns or unfulfilled longings, most of which have little to do with the reality of maintaining a relationship" (Rose, 1985, p. 253). Additionally, Johnson (1983) argued that less and less of us are at peace with ourselves, secure in our relationships, content with our loves, or are at home in the world. Many of us yearn for meaning of life, for values and beliefs we can live by for love, intimacy, and relationship.

### **Female Identity Development**

The development of one's identity is the core element of the evolution of the self. Within this dynamic specific variables contribute to the formulation of identity and self, including social, cultural, psychological, familial, and generational variables (Lytle, Bakken, & Romig, 1997). In depth psychological terms, the self encompasses the conscious, the unconscious, and the ego (Jung, 1954). According to Jung (1959), the individuation process is a psychological process of inner growth, becoming aware of oneself, of one's make-up, and the way to discover one's true, inner self. To do this one must understand the ego, the center of our consciousness. The ego allows individuals to distinguish themselves from others. The ego is composed of one's psychological qualities, so people can make sense of who they are and how they behave (Jung, 1954). Furthermore, the unconscious is composed of hidden aspects of ourselves that continue to work on the conscious and thus on our everyday life; although we are mostly not aware of it. Together, this is the ego complex (Jung, 1954). von Franz (1993) further explains, "The ego has an archetypal foundation, and that it is the self which builds up the ego complex" (p. 20). Inner



growth encapsulates the themes within many fairy-tales teaching females about the trials and tribulations of growing into adulthood.

To illustrate these concepts more fully, a brief analysis of The Brothers Grimm version of Little Red Riding Hood, also known as Little Red Cap, will be reviewed. The central theme within Little Red Cap is the threat of being devoured to halt the identity process, never to achieve individuation (Bettelheim, 1976). Similar, basic psychological constellations, which are seen in every person's development, can lead to how the individual's personality is constructed, depending upon the life experiences of the individual and the way in which these experiences are interpreted (Bettelheim, 1976). Little Red Cap's mother warns her to stay on the path to grandmother house, not to stray off it. During one's developmental phase, staying on the safe path seems uneventful. Eventually the adolescent will stray off the path, making her own experiences that will foster her growth as an individual. Little Red Cap's obligations are to get food to her grandmother's house. Along the way she runs into the Wolf. The Wolf could be a representation of the personal unconscious. When the Wolf entices Little Red Cap to pick the flowers and to stray off the path, it is her unconscious starting to become aware the self. When the task of picking flowers is no longer enjoyable, Little Red Cap becomes aware of her obligation to get to her grandmother's home and her personal unconscious is in the process of becoming conscious. The individuation process is beginning.

When Little Red Cap arrives at the grandmother's home the Wolf had already eaten the grandmother (a mother-figure) and tries to seduce Little Red Cap into the house. Symbolically, the mother complexes are not able to soothe or protect Little Red Cap from outside dangers; the grandmother is eaten, and the mother is absent (Bettelheim, 1976). This conflict might be a beginning step for pre-adolescents who are struggling with one's own naiveté and how to

navigate the world's dangers. If left undeveloped, this naive aspect of the individual could cripple one becoming fully psychologically developed, possibly leading to future struggles with the self.

When the wolf devours both the grandmother and Little Red Cap, this act is symbolizing a period of rest for the child (Bettelheim, 1976). When the hunter cuts Little Red Cap and the grandmother from the stomach of the wolf, Little Red Cap "springs out of the wolf's belly, she has come to life as a different person" (Bettelheim, 1976, p. 179). This illustrates an inner transformation for Little Red Cap, she is "reborn on a higher plane of existence, no longer a child, she returns to life as a young maiden" (Bettelheim, 1976, p. 183). Little Red Cap is in the process of individuation.

Lastly, the color red used throughout this fairy-tale also has symbolic meaning; sexual attractiveness or awakening (Bettelheim, 1976). This is an important point to discuss because sexual attractiveness/awakening is a core feature within one's identity development and attachment. According to Bettelheim (1976), "Little Red Cap's danger is her budding sexuality, for which she is not yet emotionally mature enough to deal with it" (p. 173). Psychologically, a person must be mature enough to master sexual experiences and deal with them in a mature nature (Bettelheim, 1976). If this part of one's development is under-developed it can lead to ambivalence about one's self and could expose the person to experiences that result in something negative and unhealthy. Hence, this ambivalence within one's development will be played out with each partner the female chooses, leading to an unfulfilled relational experience. Little Red Cap illustrates ambivalence can lead to destruction of the self. This is seen by Little Red Cap not being afraid of the wolf or concerned about the whereabouts of the grandmother. She is ambivalent about the whole situation. Until there is a strong working alliance between Little Red

Cap and the mother through the process of identification with the parent and conscious learning from the parent, will the child, then, grow into a successful adult (Bettelheim, 1976).

In contrast to a Jungian, depth psychological viewpoint, Erik Erikson's developmental stance on identity also has merit. For instance, at the beginning of the story, Little Red Cap could be seen as a very young child, leaving her mother's house to deliver baked goods to grandmother's house. According to Erikson (1950), this is the initiative versus guilt stage; the exploration stage. Little Red Cap is exploring her environment as she walks through the woods to grandmother's house. When Little Red Cap is confronted by the Wolf he entices her to veer off the path and explore the beautiful flowers that lay about. After picking many flowers, Little Red Cap asserts her control and gets back onto her path. Furthermore, when Little Red Cap arrives at the grandmother's home, developmentally, she has entered the industry versus inferiority stage of development (Erikson, 1950). Many pre-adolescents might be thinking, "am I doing the right thing?" or "should I enter grandmother's house, knowing something is askew?" Lastly, when Little Red Cap is inside the belly of the wolf she is transforming, moving into the adolescent identity and role confusion stage. When rescued Little Red Cap presents as a different person. She is more mature and is developing a sense of self; her personal identity (Erikson, 1950).

Both the Jungian and Eriksonian perspectives illustrate for the female how identity can be achieved and the different stages and experiences one must go through to reach and complete each stage successfully. If a stage is incomplete the person will be stuck, developmentally, in that stage and as the person grows into adulthood she will carry with her ambivalence and immaturity, which will stunt the development of the self. This is how the fairy-tale relates to a female and her relationships.

Erik Erikson's model of eight developmental epochs play a role in female identity, namely in intimate relationship formation. According to Fullinwider-Bush & Jacobvitz (1993), identity is defined as, "the stable, consistent, and reliable sense of who one is and what one stands for as a contributing member of society" (p. 87). Furthermore, Erikson's psychosocial stage theory of development suggested that in the last stages of adolescence, when an individual is moving into young adulthood, this is a specific time period for resolving issues of identity and, therefore, moving into the crises period of intimacy versus isolation (Erikson, 1950).

Furthermore, Erikson (1950) described the notion of isolation as related to intimacy as, "the readiness to isolate and if necessary to destroy those forces and people whose essence seems dangerous to one's own, and whose 'territory' seems to encroach on the extent of one's intimate relations" (p.264). Recent studies have indicated that this stage is more intertwined and that women struggle with integration of their identity more so than men do (Kooyman, Pierce, and Zavadil, 2011). Developing a sense of identity is one of the most important accomplishments in the stage of late adolescence. Formation of identity prepares the adolescent for adulthood by organizing all past and present identifications, attributes, desires, and orientations into a coherent and cohesive representation of self. The positive outcome of this struggle for integration is a sense of identity-or a sense of continuity and consistency of self over time. The negative aspect is a sense of confusion about one's identity or role, a lack of certainty about who one is, or about the part one is playing in the design of life (Erikson, 1968).

Intimacy plays a pivotal role in the formation of one's identity, specifically a female's sense of self. Females tend to place more emphasis on their interpersonal relationships versus males who tend to place more emphasis on intrapersonal dynamics (Morgan and Farber, 1982).

Fisher (1981), conducted a cross-sectional study of the achievement of intimacy and the transitions in relationship style from adolescence to young adulthood and found that college women appeared very competent at the developmental task of intimacy versus male's intimacy style indicating that they were uninvolved in their relationships. Realizing that females at an early age place more emphasis on their interpersonal relationships, one may wonder how societal and familial dynamics are interwoven into their collective unconscious, which will eventually play out in all aspects of relationships.

In comparison to Fisher's (1981) study on relationship style, Kerplman, Pittman, Cadely, Tuggle, Levy, and Adler-Baeder (2012) conducted a study looking at identity styles, romantic attachments, and identity commitment. Through their research these scholars found that identity exploration styles begin forming in childhood experiences with parental responsiveness, regulation of behavior, and support for autonomy. The identity styles are the following:

1. Informational: When I have to make a decision, I like to spend a lot of time thinking about my options.
2. Normative: I think it's better to have a firm set of beliefs than to be open-minded.
3. Diffuse/Avoidant: When I try to make a decision, I try to wait as long as possible in order to see what will happen.
4. Identity commitment: I have a definite set of values that I use in order to make personal decisions. (Kerplman et al. 2012, p. 1432)

The attachment dimensions in romantic relationships depend in part on actual or expected experience in those types of relationships. Factoring in the attachment dynamics of the individual, three arguments could be made about the following constructs. First, the attachment and identity constructs predicted identity commitments independently and directly. Second, if adult attachment styles are a representation of early attachments transferred to new relationships, then attachment dimensions could be expected to precede and predict identity styles. Third, if the adult attachment styles are being reported by adolescents, then attachment styles in relation to romantic relationships could be expected to follow identity styles (Kerpelman et al, 2012).

Morgan & Farber (1982) stated, “Women enter the intimacy stage with their biological attributes and with the legacies of previous developmental eras. The choice of a partner is, for women, the critical element in the identity achievement process” (p. 202). Johnson, Brady, McNair, Congdon, Niznik & Anderson (2007) observed that, “identity development may be a necessary step for the development of relationship intimacy and closeness and emerging adulthood is a time of identity exploration when dealing with relationships” (p. 2). Bartoszuk and Pittman (2010) looked at identity exploration and commitment and found that females were significantly more invested in the interpersonal domain than males.

The previous studies showed females are more prone to interpersonal relationships and intimacy versus males who are more invested in intrapersonal relationships. Adding together childhood experiences, especially childhood stories such as Little Red Cap that revolve around development, romance, intimacy, and love, this creation of the female’s unconscious may help explain why females are more focused on interpersonal intimate relationships that are outside the family realm. Attachment style will have an impact on one’s identity style in that the way in which an individual is raised and cared for as an infant will have an impact on how one will treat

others and how one views one's self. Examining Little Red Cap and the developmental process in which she goes through to ultimately reach maturity and how she deals with ambivalence is a teaching tool for young children and adults who are going through the identity stages of development. This story illustrates how development of the ego and self is a necessary step in the individuation process. If a woman is lacking something within, if she is ambivalent about herself and life, she is unlikely to achieve wholeness, and thus stay stuck within a certain stage.

### **Jung's Theory of the Shadow**

Absorbing all elements from birth into adulthood one accumulates a vast amount of images, thoughts, and desires adding to the manifestation of unconscious material. Jungian theory provides a meaningful lens through which the unconscious may be understood in the context of the development of the self and the psychological meaning of fairy-tales. For many years, Jung had been dissatisfied with Freud's concept of the unconscious. Jung chose to formulate his idea of the collective unconscious to provide a model for the structure of the psyche. In addition, Jung sought to clarify the concept of the personal unconscious along distinctly Jungian lines (Jung, 1954). Jung (1959) believed that the psyche was made up of different components, namely the personal unconscious and the collective unconscious. Within these components or layers reside different aspects of the self. These include the way one presents oneself to the outer world and experiences of the internal world of the individual. These aspects have both a conscious and unconscious side. For example, the ego is the center of the conscious personality and the Shadow is the center of the personal unconscious. Furthermore, the personal unconscious rests as a layer on the ego and the Anima/Animus rests as a layer upon the Shadow (Jung, 1959). The top layer of one's unconscious is comprised of the ego and the persona. This public face embodies our social role and mediates between the ego and society.

Jung postulated that underlying the conscious side is the personal unconscious, which contains drives and desires, forgotten memories, and painful ideas that remain hidden from consciousness. Jung referred to this as the Shadow, the personal unconscious. Finally, Jung (1959) concluded that the deepest and most extensive area of the psyche is the collective unconscious, a point of contact between the individual and transpersonal life forces. The individual is affected by archetypes and historical and cultural developments which in turn contribute to the collective unconscious of the group, culture, and world (Jung, 1959).

Hidden within these layers Jung (1959) found four major archetypes that have the most frequent and disturbing influence on the ego, namely: the Shadow; Anima/Animus; the Self; and, the Persona. First, the persona is the mask one wears to show the world and is characterized by roles one plays in life. The persona is presented to the external world in order to be perceived in an acceptable way. Individuals present this layer to the external world through social roles and relationships in order to elicit social approval, love, and acceptance (Jung, 1959). Thinking about how one may portray one's self externally, there is also an internal force at work which lies deep within one's unconscious. This internal force is the Shadow and it is the opposite of the ego in Jung's structure of the psyche (Jung, 1959).

The dark side or the center of the personal unconscious, as Jung (1959) called it, is coined the Shadow side of ourselves. Jung (1959) defined the Shadow as, "a moral problem that challenges the whole ego personality. To become conscious of it involves recognizing the dark aspects of the personality as present and real" (p. 8). Presenting oneself in a bright, uplifting way is more socially acceptable than presenting the repressed or unknown material that is hidden deep within one's self. The darker side of the personal unconscious is not necessarily the inferior side although it contains inferior aspects. It can also contain the seeds of creativity that have been



lying dormant and undeveloped because they were unacceptable to the family. The Shadow, according to Jung (1954) needs to be integrated into the ego in order for the individual to realize her/his own gifts and then the self can develop. This is what Jung called the individuation process. It cannot proceed without the integration of the Shadow. It is the key to wholeness, the guiding principle of life (Jung, 1954). It is important to distinguish that Jung's concept of the personal shadow is a natural fact, not merely a receptacle for the rejected ego contents, but with a real acceptance of its own, and a drive towards both light and dark (Moore, 1984). To understand our Shadow sides, the other part of our "self," all aspects of our psyche must be integrated. For example, intellectual individuals most often lack emotional expressiveness. This lack of expressing emotions could represent the repressed side of one's self, the shadow. Integration of the emotional side with the thinking side will balance the person, transforming them into a whole self (von Franz, 1996). This is how one can become integrated through the individuation process.

Jung's concept of the Shadow provides relevance when examining the female's intimate relational patterns. For instance, if the female is looking for love and acceptance within her relationship, she may present herself in a socially acceptable way to gain the love she is trying to obtain. This may be seen through a superficial behavior that is deemed socially appropriate. For example, the woman always shows a happy demeanor even though she is upset, because stories have taught us that being docile and happy are key ingredients to obtaining a partner. Eventually, unconscious material will integrate with the conscious attitudes and behavior, possibly creating tension or a shift in the female's psyche, thus showing the Shadow side.

Understanding the personal shadow is the first step. In addition to the personal shadow, considering the archetypal Shadow might be more difficult to integrate into our psyches. For example, when the Shadow appears as an archetype, "it is quite within bounds of possibility for a

man to recognize the relative evil of his nature, but it is a rare and shattering experience for him to gaze into the face of absolute evil” (Jung, 1959, p. 10). The Shadow houses the dark aspects within us. These aspects are pushed down within the psyche to a place where the individual has trouble integrating the information to a conscious level. Operating from the Shadow side can be detrimental in that an individual may act out in inappropriate ways; for example, being cruel to others. According to Moore (1984), “the archetypal Shadow is not experienced in logical thought, but through its effects such as drives, strong affects, and body sensations, best described in a metaphorical way in poetry and myths, or in the language of dream or ritual” (p. 268). Furthermore, if one is unable to differentiate between their Shadow sides a power imbalance may occur. For example, each of us must learn to make distinctions for ourselves differentiating between an inner tyrant, ogre, or witch, which is the archetypal Shadow side, and the assertive voice of the self, which may be the personal Shadow side (Zweig & Wolf, 1997). If one can fully differentiate these two sides the individuation process is activated. The Shadow is a strong aspect of oneself, driving and feeding off various parts of our psyche. This unconscious aspect may occupy a major role in how one behaves within their relationship, specifically, if the Shadow is yearning to be revealed. If the Shadow is unknowingly revealed, this revelation could create a disturbance within the relationship. For example, if one partner begins to behave cruelly towards the other partner, displaying her inner witch, not fully understanding where this emotion is coming from, the relationship may begin to decline, leaving the female to feel that she has been disappointed again by her partner. In turn, she will look for another partner. When the Shadow (the witch) wants to be revealed again the pattern will continue until she can consciously interpret her own thoughts, desires, and behavior.

As one can surmise, the Shadow is comprised of opposites that live deep within one's psyche (light and dark, good and evil). At times, the Shadow will show itself in ways that disgust or irritate us (Hillman, 1974). This disgust or irritation is our Shadow projecting itself onto others. For instance, if one's beloved is gone for a long time, the other may start to have negative ideas about the goings-on with the absent beloved. When the beloved returns the other cannot imagine that they thought such negative things about their beloved. According to von Franz (1995), "the actual warm human contact dissipates those clouds of projection, but if one is away for a long time, and the tie for affection and feeling loosens, people begin to project" (p. 188). The individual should take notice and stock of his or her own reactions and interactions with the Shadow. Within the relationship, one may be more apt to project onto their partner because the partner is the closest person to them in terms of intimacy and love. Possibly, the relationship will not be able to sustain the projections, ending once again with a failed relationship and ultimately without a "happily-ever-after." McGuigan (2009) stated, "Projection is the unconscious transfer of one's own conflicting, dark part-personalities onto another person. We project by attributing a quality to someone else in an unconscious effort to banish it from ourselves, to keep ourselves from seeing it within" (p. 354). Moreover, one can project favorable or loving qualities and later on when the projection is able to be withdrawn and made conscious, one will realize the positive qualities were really in ones-self, not the other (Jung, 1954).

It has also been suggested that Jung thought of projection as the "psychological adjustment mechanism where the 'in here' becomes 'out there;' it is the process whereby an individual blurs the distinction between subjective and objective experience" (McGuigan, 2009, p. 354). To illustrate this point, Zweig and Wolf (1997) interviewed men and women about romance and the deep connections that were felt the instant they met their "other." One example

of projection and the Shadow is the following: “Carrie described a first date with Vince, who appeared on a motorcycle in black leather boots and a jacket. She stood on the balcony above and said to herself, ‘My Romeo has arrived’” (p. 146). Her Shadow projection had found its target. In dating and romance we long to complete ourselves in the Beloved. The integration of the Shadow will lead us to retrieve those rejected parts which seek acceptance so that we can feel whole (Zweig & Wolf, 1997). These rejected elements could be images and desires concealed within the female’s psyche that are actual and true parts of her own psyche. Until the Shadow is realized there is no real chance of wholeness or authenticity in self or relationship (Jung, 1954).

With the deepening of the romantic relationship the ego becomes increasingly conscious. Consciousness then is the product of one’s perception and orientation in the external world (Jung, 1968). With this return to consciousness by the ego, the Self will return and will demand more recognition and authenticity, the personal Shadow (Zweig & Wolf, 1997). If the ego resists relinquishing control and continues to dominate the dating process (the Shadow) we keep seeking an ideal image of the Beloved that reinforces its fantasy expectations. As a result, the relationship ends and we search for yet another partner (Zweig & Wolf, 1997). The female then will look for another Beloved upon whom she can project her own animus and when the Self needs to be recognized the cycle will begin all over again. Not being able to tolerate our inner opposites will pose a threat to ourselves and the other onto whom we project ourselves. This intolerance of the fantasy expectations will inevitably let the female down. It is not the relationship that is the problem; rather it is the fantasy or myth of the “happily-ever-after” and projection of this concept that is the problem because the Shadow hasn’t been realized as an actual part of her real nature.

If one projects perfection onto their partner the partner may in turn become critical of those things that are imperfect. For example, “that’s why the goddess can shift so quickly into the witch, or the king can pick up the whip of the tyrant, or the hero in an instant can seem ordinary, fading into insubstantiality like a dream figure” (Zweig & Wolf, 1997, pp. 165-166). Projections will eventually break down and one will soon see the other’s Shadow components, which might make the relationship more complex. Zweig and Wolf (1997) stated,

To romance the dark side and to hold on to the soul  
connection, the archetypal unity that joins us together;  
to see through the illusion of Beauty to the Beast and to  
see beyond that to the authentic beauty that lies at the heart  
of our loved ones. To be able to contain both the light side  
and the dark is a great developmental step- and a promise  
of romancing the shadow. (p. 166)

Moreover, if the couple can negotiate the Shadow, (the opposites that will inevitably rise up within the relationship), this authenticity then creates individuality thus allowing for greater psychic space between the partners and more room for individuality with clear boundaries resulting in the couple remaining a couple (Zweig & Wolf, 1997). As Jung (1959) stated, “only the individual who learns to deal with his/her own shadow has done something real for the world for no one can see straight if they do not see themselves” (p. 99). This is a further step of integration of the Ego and Shadow. The next step is visiting another layer, the Anima and Animus, which reside within each of us.

## **Anima/Animus**

Every individual has aspects that are feminine and masculine; these aspects are referred to as the Anima and Animus. According to Hillman (1973), “The Anima, being of feminine gender, is exclusively a figure that compensates the masculine consciousness. The same figure is not to be found in the imagery of a woman’s unconscious. In accordance with the yoke of opposites, women have the Animus instead” (p. 114-115). It is important to keep in mind Hillman’s (1973) perspective is not a classical Jungian understanding, but a post-Jungian perspective. By definition, anima is feminine and animus is masculine (Jung, 1943). The Anima has some Shadow aspects but the Shadow presents itself in a heterosexual male as someone of the same sex. It is different for homosexual males. Thus, the Anima and Animus are called the contra-sexual aspects of the psyche (Hillman, 1974; Jung, 1943). When the female or male starts to fantasize or mythologize in a way that is the opposite of how they behave or think, it is the unconscious part of their Anima/Animus trying to be seen or heard (Hillman, 1974). To illustrate the anima picture a butterfly. The butterfly is the consciousness. What happens around the butterfly is the soul. The feel of the air is the Animus/Anima. It is always around us, but it, the Anima, is difficult to pinpoint because it is a part of one’s Shadow, our opposite within (Hillman, 1974). The Anima concept is thought of as the feeling part within the male, the feminine side where love resides. It is Eros (Hillman, 1974). Hillman (1974) found,

...that authentic aspects of anima become judged only  
 from the standpoint of love. Hatred, spite, suspicion,  
 jealousy, rejection, enmity, deception, betrayal, cruelty,  
 misanthropy, ridicule play their part in anima experiences.  
 These emotions are appropriate to many of the cold-blooded

witchy creatures whom we find in legend and poetry and  
our dreams and lives. (p. 110)

With Anima residing within the masculine men can project their Anima images onto the feminine. These projections may affect the woman in so far as being seen as a “witchy creature” or a deceptive female, placing the female in a role incongruent with whom the female really is, resulting in the masculine projection of his Shadow and Anima (Goss, 2008). Understanding and cultivating one’s Anima and Animus may result in further uncovering of one’s opposites that reside deep within the psyche. Relationships governed by the Animus may produce unstable paradoxes resulting in the female projecting her animus onto her partner, which may fall short of the unconscious expectations that one may have fantasized from an early age. Johnson (1983) spoke about this paradox and how individuals fall in love with the fantasy or idealized version of love versus a real flesh and bone human being. These two versions comprise the paradox. The story of Tristan and Iseult illustrate this point. Tristan was in love with a woman named Iseult the Fair. She was his fantasy love, his idealized version that lived inside of him. Although Tristan longed for Iseult the Fair, he married Iseult of the White Hands. Throughout his story Tristan is trying to live with this paradox to learn how to honor both worlds contained in romantic love. “The divine world of Iseult the Fair that Tristan pursues, and the human world of Iseult of the White Hands that he rejects” (Johnson, 1983, p. 132). Furthermore, “when a flesh and bone mortal human appears in a man’s life who offers him love and relatedness, he ends in rejecting her because she can’t measure up to the idealized perfection, Iseult the Fair, who can only live in his inner mind” (Johnson, 1983, p. 129).

These projections may also reflect, at a collective level, a reaction to the legacy of centuries of patriarchal power, as constellated in the psyches of individual women (Goss, 2008).

Furthermore, because of giving into the negative Animus, a malevolent force creates conflict and pain in relationships within the collective projections between men and women. With this aspect of Animus, it wants to stop us from examining and therefore disarming it (Goss, 2008). The Animus is characterized by the “logos,” as the Anima is characterized by the “Eros.” Logos is, for example, academic pursuits or being able to succeed in the external world of career and work (von Franz, 1995). When logos are undeveloped it appears as opinionated unstable thinking or cognition. This is the negative aspect. All archetypes have a positive and negative charge (Jung, 1954). Jung (1954) summarized that a woman who is overcome by the animus may express curiosity versus a thirst for knowledge, prejudice versus judgment, imagination or dreaming versus thinking and wishing versus will. The female may wish or dream for her prince but when the fantasy does not materialize she is disappointed again by her own unconscious desires. Furthermore, when the trust within the relationship is broken there is no returning to the Beloved. Before any betrayal can occur the relationship denies the anima aspect. After betrayal occurs the relationship is denied by the Anima’s resentments.

Unconsciousness of the Anima is taking the emotional part of the relationship for granted, an innocent trust that there are no problems. That what one believes, says, and how one behaves is enough (Hillman, 1975). Trying to build the perfect relationship with no flaws or betrayal and maintaining an everlasting fidelity could lead to exhaustion in so far as always striving to preserve one’s internalized desires regarding relationship and love versus learning how to tolerate one’s inner opposites. Tolerating inner opposites may result in being aware of the Shadow, Anima, and Animus desperately showing itself throughout the relationship. This could be the core feature of developing and maintaining the relationship, as well as learning about one’s inner opposites. Take, for example, the story of Parsifal and Blanche Fleur. Parsifal is an



innocent fool who draws inner opposites together and Blanche Fleur is his inner woman, the one who animates, and is the fountain of life within a man's heart (Johnson, 1983). If one of these opposites is disharmonious the individual will experience an unbalance in life. For instance, a man comes to a therapist's office in tears, caught in some darkness. The client can only talk about the dread in his life. If told stories from his childhood, these stories may draw out the Parsifal in him (his inner fool). This inner fool is his child-like innocence coming through. Soon the client laughs and the "maiden in him who hadn't known joy in six years burst forth" (Johnson, 1983, p. 20). Thus, the individual is becoming whole again. His Parsifal and Blanche Fleur are meeting.

Although the feminine and masculine are opposites, Johnson (1983) pointed out that, "to become a complete man or woman each of us must be able to learn how to love, how to handle power, how to exert control and to flow spontaneously with life" (p. 18). Until one can fully realize and tolerate one's own Animus/Anima there will be no wholeness. Wholeness may lead to better relationships with the Self and the Beloved in that the myth of the prince is now transformed into their own realization of who the other is, not who the other should be, in a non-rational sense. This realization then can heal the relationship patterns of women because they are learning and becoming aware of the myth that lives inside them. The myth only gives examples of how love can be, not how it should be, which is determined by the couple and their own expectations of what they want from the relationship, not solely based on a fantastical story from one's childhood.

### **Psychotherapy**

Many women seek psychotherapy, each bringing their own unique challenges for psychologists into a session. Although all clinicians are trained to find their own way of practice,

many psychoanalytically trained clinicians are incorporating the use of the fairy-tale to help bring the client's unconscious material to the surface that will allow for exploration and insight. Interestingly, movies and stories can offer ideas about the way one lives one's life, as well as offer an examination of an often-confusing world, much as ancient myths and fairy-tales do (Paquette, 2003). Many clients are looking for answers towards healing or understanding their state of unrest in the present time. With the use of fairy-tales as a guidepost, the clinician and client can explore themes that parallel the client's life and the fairy-tale. For instance, Jung (1959) used archetypes and fairy-tales to interpret what was happening unconsciously with the client. To expand on this concept, the following passage explains the use of fairy-tales in psychotherapy,

Analysis of the fairy-tale, from a Jungian point of view, leads to the isolation identification, and study of archetypal patterns and to the process of individuation played out as a whole endowed with meaning. Thus the fairy-tale...is the expression of a process of evolution, of change, of improvement and enrichment of the initial situation. By analogy, the process of individuation, which begins in a condition of suffering and neurotic decompensation, leads not only to restitution, but to progressive enlargement of the personality. In expressing and interpreting their own fairy-tale, a client may give personal associations to each element via symbols found to be universal in psychoanalysis and Western culture, incorporating parallels in other tales, myths, art, religion, and relevant psychoanalytic material. (Short, 1996, p. 39)

Incorporating the fairy-tale may help both client and clinician build a better picture of the client's themes, patterns, and thought processes of relationships and everyday living. As these patterns start to emerge the client's insight about their own development as an adult starts to take shape. Gaining this introspection of one's self will be helpful in exploring deeper meanings of the unconscious material that starts to emerge into consciousness for the client. Silverman (2004) found that clients are guided through the development and examination of a profound relationship integrating a carefully chosen myth or fairy-tale character as a way of working with complex personal material. This makes the personal projection onto the character particularly intense and creates a setting in which the client can identify uncomfortable feelings without being threatened.

As part of growing up, many children have heard fairy-tales and thus these stories have incorporated themselves into the child's unconscious, which can be seen through their imagination. "Myths, legends and fairy stories as part of their early child development offer a rich source of material to draw from and enlist in the therapeutic endeavor" (Walker, 2010, p. 83). Moreover, fairy-tales resonate with our imaginations and desires; specifically children and young adults who have not unlearned their sense of wonderment and potential (Walker, 2010). Although older adults may unlearn their sense of wonderment and potential, the fairy-tale still plays a role in how a female may perceive intimate relationships in terms of romance and everlasting love, unbeknownst to the female, as the myth of the story is an integral part of her unconscious. If the adult female is struggling between something positive and something negative in her life, this tension could be a manifestation representing an internal conflict between the Id and ego (Walker, 2010). The concepts of good and evil are themes that appear throughout the fairy-tale and are played out in the adult female's everyday life. Many clients

have struggled throughout their lives because common notions have not been tested by reality. Victims of abuse or neglect will have experienced the triumph of evil over good rather than the inverse. Allowing a young person to identify with a fairy-tale or to make their own version up could be a useful means of unlocking feelings of suspicion, shame or guilt (Walker, 2010). Utilizing the fairy-tale in this way may help with unlocking the adult's unconscious material which will enable the psychotherapist and client to examine the different meanings that the story holds for that particular client. Furthermore, other material may come forth that was repressed or suppressed by the client, enabling it to be easier to talk about and examine while in a story format. In addition, in the human psyche where the collective unconscious lay, a layer of common human psychic energy exists. The potentiality of individual development is emerging. In early childhood fairy-tales symbolically begin to form layers within the psyche, marking stages in the individuation process. The individual then experiences the possibility of learning and gaining understanding of the unknown, inner world, as well as of the outer world. They show him ways of experiencing the potential of psychic functioning beyond his own personal experience (Dieckmann, 1997). Although this is not a new concept to incorporate in therapy sessions, it has shown to be useful in extracting deeper meaning for the client in response to their psychological issues, and could help explain other psychic issues that the client is experiencing at this time (Dieckmann, 1997).

## **Conclusion**

This study set out to explore whether females who identify with traditional fairy-tales have intimate relationship patterns that reflect projections of these stories. From early childhood, many females have read fairy-tales or have watched romantic stories enacted through films. Growing up with images of prince and princesses, castles, and true love may create a fantasy

world that women set out to obtain. Due to the proliferation of fairy-tales in media and popular culture it is difficult for many women to escape notions of romantic love and the grandiosity of imagination. Because of these fairy-tales filtering through into our collective unconscious, the female is often unaware of the power of these stories and how our culture may perpetuate their myths of “happily-ever-after” relationships. Although love is real, the essence behind the love affects the female’s relationship. Furthermore, utilizing Jung’s concepts of Shadow, Anima, and Animus provides a unique look into how individuals behave and think on a conscious and unconscious level. These also provide insights into how one may act within a relationship, as well as the psychological motivation behind behavior.

Utilizing the fairy-tale as a point of departure for bringing unconscious issues forward may help the female to reorganize her thoughts in a more productive, “true” way versus an imagined way. The study sought to understand how romantic fairy-tale themes may impact the way in which women perceive their role and the role of their partner in intimate relationships, as well as how these expectations influence the development of the female identity and the meaning- making that arises from such.

### Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter will begin by explaining the rationale for using qualitative research methodology as well as a phenomenological approach for the study. A discussion on the validity, reliability, and ethical concerns of the study will also be provided to ensure that proper guidelines were followed throughout the study. Lastly, a description of the semi-structured interview along with research questions and sampling selection will be discussed.

#### Research Instrumentation

**Instruments.** The instrument used for this study was a semi-structured interview produced solely by the researcher. The interview consisted of 11 open-ended questions that explored relationships, romantic love, and fairy-tales. The open-ended questions were:

1. Can you describe your most meaningful experience of your favorite fairy-tale?
2. What about these fairy-tales did you specifically identify with?
3. Was there a fairy-tale character that you identified with in particular?
4. How do you think this fairy-tale may influence your view of intimate relationships?
5. Reflecting back to your childhood, can you describe any perceived beliefs you had about romance?
6. In what ways have your beliefs about intimacy/romantic love changed overtime from childhood to adulthood?
7. Describe how your actual experience of intimacy/romantic love has reflected your fantasies? Expectations?

8. Can you describe your thoughts and feelings about intimacy, in general?
9. What does intimacy mean to you?
10. How do you feel about being a woman in the context of romantic relationships?
11. Is there anything else you would like to address regarding being a woman and intimacy?

Using a semi-structured interview is one method to gather data within qualitative research. Due to the more open-ended, less structured nature of this type of interviewing, the researcher was able to gather more robust material from the participant while allowing for an emerging worldview of the respondent and allows new ideas about the topic to surface (Merriam, 2009). Furthermore, using a semi-structured interview attempts to understand the patterns of an individual's everyday lived experiences from the participants' own perspectives (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) stated, "This kind of interview seeks to obtain descriptions of the interviewee's lived world" (p. 27). Lastly, the use of the eleven specific questions produced by the researcher was meant to explore women's lived experiences related to romance and fairy-tales. Describing these experiences in more detail added to the understanding of the human experience and narrative of these women. Although using a semi-structured interview for this study was shown to be the best choice based on the above information, there are seven other types of qualitative interviews (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). First, the computer-assisted interviews, which consist of email correspondence, imply an asynchronous interaction in time, the interviewer writing down a question and then waiting for a response or through chat interviews. These interviews would be appropriate for virtual reality research. The drawbacks

from this type of interviewing are that the researcher cannot view body posture or nonverbal cues from the interviewee and both the researcher and respondent have to be well versed in written communication. Second, the focus group interview allows a group interview to take place versus the more traditional one-on-one interview process. This type of interview cultivates a non-directive style that encourages a variety of viewpoints on the topic in focus for the group. These types of interviews are well suited for exploratory studies. One downfall of using a focus group is that the transcribed interviews may be chaotic because of the lively interactions of the interviewees.

Third, factual interviews are used when specific information is needed for example, interviewing witnesses for psychological testimony. Fourth, conceptual interviews explore the meaning and the conceptual dimensions of central terms such as uncovering the essential nature of a phenomenon. Fifth, the narrative interview consists of stories from the interviewee. There is the short story, oral story, and the life story. Sixth, discursive interviews focus on how knowledge and truth are created within discourses, and on the power relations of discourses. The discursive interview, “studies how individuals and groups utilize language to enact specific activities and identities” (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 155).

Lastly, confrontational interviews implore that interviewee’s can challenge the interviewer’s assumptions, making a more power balance between the two. In addition, both respondent and interviewer can ask questions and give answers, with reciprocal criticism of what the other has to say (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Within qualitative research, one can choose which interview will work best for that study. The narrative interview will be used throughout this research study. The narrative interview was chosen because it focuses on the participants’ own life stories and it offers a natural way through which the participants can organize and



express their own meaning making (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). This research is based upon women's life narratives pertaining to intimate relationships, resulting in the narrative interview being the best choice for this study.

### **Rationale for the Use of Qualitative Research Methodology**

A phenomenological approach within qualitative research helps to provide a descriptive basis for human emotion and often-intense human experiences (Merriam, 2009). Utilizing a phenomenological perspective allowed for more in-depth coverage of the individual's life experience and how they interpreted and constructed their lives and their worlds (Merriam, 2009). Understanding how one perceives the world will influence one's behavior.

Phenomenology is defined as, "the study of people's conscious experience of their life-world, that is, their everyday life and social action" (Merriam, 2009, p. 25). Another definition of phenomenon is found in Chambers Dictionary of Etymology (2005), "a fact or occurrence, a manifestation, from Greek *phainomenon* that which appears or is seen; the meaning of an exceptional fact, extraordinary occurrence" (p.786). Combining—ology to phenomenon, "meaning any science or branch of knowledge" (Chambers Dictionary of Etymology, 2005, p. 726). Lastly, understanding the lived experiences of others characterizes phenomenology as a philosophy as well as a method, and the practice involves studying a small number of subjects through lengthy interviews to seek out themes or patterns within an individual's life (Creswell, 2009). Phenomenology was founded by Edmund Husserl around 1900 and began with an emphasis on consciousness and experience, but was later expanded by Husserl to include the human-life perspective (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The human-life perspective is the overarching concept that this research study was trying to obtain. Hence, utilizing the phenomenological approach to studying women's intimate relations, fairy-tales and women's

meaning making were best served by using this approach because it offered the opportunity for participants to provide their own narrative pertaining to intimate relationships.

Using a qualitative approach versus a quantitative approach affords many advantages for the researcher. Since this study is based on human beings' life experiences and how they view their world, utilizing a qualitative approach helped with providing a rich narrative of these experiences which broadened the scope for future researchers. Moreover, Merriam (2009) stated, "the quantitative study portrays a world of variables and static states. By contrast the qualitative study describes people acting in events" (p. 210). Understanding the individual's world and making meaning for that individual is at the heart of qualitative research. Quantitative research, on the other hand, is more interested in predicting outcomes and replicating studies to ensure validity and reliability. Since human behavior cannot be replicated exactly, (their behavior is dynamic not static), using a qualitative approach for this study was better suited than using a quantitative study which is more interested in hypothesis testing and deductive reasoning. Furthermore, qualitative research seeks to bring clarity to the complexity of the human experience. Second, knowledge can be learned from listening to other people describe their lived experiences. Third, there are continual openings for emergent meanings. Furthermore, the negative side of qualitative research is that qualitative research does not lend itself to generalizations. Second, there are few standard rules for qualitative research. Third, the meanings are derived from lived experiences can change over time. Fourth, qualitative research does not lend itself to verification (Creswell, 2009). Although there are positives and negatives to using qualitative research, the main point is to understand how people make meaning of their lives through exploring one's own experience as it is told from the participant's perspectives and

utilizing qualitative research ensures to provide this type of information. This study is investigated women's narratives and how they experience intimate relationships.

### **Validity, Reliability, and Ethical Concerns**

All research is concerned with producing valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner (Merriam, 2009). According to Merriam (2009):

Regardless of the type of research, validity and reliability are concerns that can be approached through careful attention to a study's conceptualization and the way in which the data are collected, analyzed, and interpreted, and the way in which the findings are presented. (p. 210)

Although qualitative research is concerned with how individuals live their lives, it is also important to understand the philosophical underpinnings of this particular method. Merriam (2009) illustrated four epistemological perspectives, namely; positivist, interpretive, critical, and postmodern.

First, positivism assumes that reality exists "out there" and it is observable, stable, and measurable. Knowledge obtained through this method is considered scientific and rigid. Second, interpretive research, this is where qualitative research is mostly placed, assumes that reality is socially constructed, there is no single observable reality. Individuals seek out their own understandings and meanings of the world around them. Furthermore, phenomenology and its most basic

philosophical assumption is that we can only know what we experience by attending to perceptions and meanings. Third, critical research is concerned with critiquing and challenging the research versus just observing it. For instance, those who engage in critical research frame their research questions in terms of power- who has it, how it's negotiated, what structures in society reinforce the current distribution of power and so on. Fourth, a postmodern world is one where the rationality, scientific method, and certainties of the modern world no longer hold. Postmodernists explanations for the way things are in the world are nothing but myths or grand narratives. (2009, pp. 9-10)

Within the qualitative framework, one or many of these perspectives may intersect while one is conducting research. To view a more comprehensive breakdown of these four philosophical underpinnings, please refer to table 1 (Appendix F). This research will utilize the phenomenological approach because it will offer a better picture of how one makes meaning of one's world and experiences as they relate to fairy-tales and love.

### **Validity**

With the different types of qualitative research, there are different validity issues to be concerned about when conducting research. Because human beings are the main instrument from which the researcher gathers data, interpretations of the participants' realities are accessed directly through their own observations and interviews (Merriam, 2009). Because of this type of data collection, the internal validity of qualitative research is seen as more "rigorous," thus, making it a strength of qualitative research (Merriam, 2009). Lastly, the qualitative researcher

can use a number of strategies to ensure proper validity throughout the research process. First, triangulation uses multiple sources of data as a means of comparing and crosschecking data, which include interviews, observations, and documents (Merriam, 2009). A second common strategy for ensuring internal validity is called respondent validation. The researcher checks with the participant to make sure that the information obtained during the interview is accurate and recorded true to the respondent's answers (Merriam, 2009). A third strategy is adequate engagement in data collection. The pool of respondents must meet saturation to gain appropriate data and validity (Merriam, 2009). The fourth common strategy is reflexivity. This is the, "process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher, the human as instrument" (Merriam, 2009, p. 219). With this particular research, ensuring that the interviews are accurate to the respondent's responses was imperative to produce a valid and reliable piece of work that reflects the experiences as truthful as possible pertaining to women's intimate relationships and fairy-tales.

### **Reliability**

Qualitative research is concerned with how human beings make meaning of their social world. Working with human beings could yield some concerns when it comes to the reliability of the study. Merriam (2009) stated, "Qualitative research is not conducted so that the laws of human behavior can be isolated. Rather, researchers seek to describe and explain the world as those in the world experience it" (p. 220). For the purposes of this study, the data showed consistency and dependable outcomes with other qualitative phenomenological studies. This was achieved through the use of triangulation, peer examination, investigators position, and the audit trail (Merriam, 2009). An audit trail in a qualitative study describes in detail how data were

collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made throughout the inquiry (Merriam, 2009).

### **Ethical Concerns**

“Ethics comes from the Greek word *ethos*, which means character” (Creswell, 2009, p. 62). The ethics of a qualitative phenomenological study serve both scientific and human interests (Creswell, 2009). All the participants were instructed on the ethical aspects and the confidentiality of the study. Each participant read, signed, and dated the ethical/ confidential statement form that was supplied by Antioch University, Santa Barbara, CA (see Appendix C). Participants were instructed that no identifying information would be used, but instead their answers would be identified as Participants A through J.

In addition to the ethical standards and procedures of the study, the researcher built rapport with each participant by explaining what the study is about, allowing the participants voice’s to be heard, and utilizing reciprocity in the research relationship (Merriam, 2009). The participants were also instructed that they had the right to withdraw from this study at any time. Lastly, this researcher bracketed her biases to ensure that contamination was kept to a minimum.

The benefits for participating in this study included deepening one’s understanding of self in relation to their relationships.

The risks of participating in this study included taking an hour out of one’s day to be interviewed, and talking about past relationships that might have been uncomfortable to discuss which may have elicited anxiety or a re-traumatization as memories were triggered during the interview. This researcher assessed the participant throughout the interview to ensure that the individual was comfortable with continuing with the interview. If the participant was exhibiting

signs of distress and wanted to withdraw from the study, the researcher would stop the interview promptly. Signs of distress/anxiety could have been crying, responding in a guarded manner to the questions, non- verbal cues such as ringing of hands, limited eye contact, fidgeting, and so forth. Referral to a community mental health center or a licensed therapist in private practice would also be offered for follow-up or residual issues that may have arisen after the conclusion of this interview.

### **Participants**

The participants for this study were recruited from Schaumburg, Illinois out of convenience for the researcher who resides in this area. The sample size for this study was n=10 females ranging in age from 25 to 40, or until saturation.

Inclusion criteria were that females must have been in at least one long-term relationship lasting for at least one year and they were to have expressed that they were familiar with fairy-tales.

Exclusion criteria included women less than 25 years of age or over 40 years of age. This age range was chosen based on the consensus that a majority of women start to think about long-term relationships beginning around 25 years of age. In addition, many women have had at least one long-term relationship within the period of 25 years of age to 40 years of age. The age discrepancy may have produced specific views endorsed by each age group pertaining to relationships. Lastly, any woman presently in a distressing relationship would be excluded from this project.

## **Procedure**

A flyer (see appendix C) was distributed on a Mid-Western campus. The flyer briefly described the purpose of the study, which was to explore female identification through fairy-tales on the subject of romantic love and relationships. The advertisement stated requirements for participation and that the time required for the interviews would be approximately one hour. During the hour, the participants were interviewed on their experiences with fairy-tales, their perceptions of fairy-tales, their meaning of intimacy, and how they view women in relationships. The interview process was done in the following way: each participant contacted the researcher either by phone or email and signed up for specific interview times. The interviews took place in Schaumburg, Illinois at the Schaumburg, Illinois Public Library conference room. This ensured privacy, safety for the participants, and it was a neutral meeting spot for both the participant and researcher. At the beginning of the interviews, each participant filled out and completed the demographic questionnaire (see Appendix B) and the confidentiality form (see Appendix D). Furthermore, for their participation, the participants received Starbucks coffee coupons.

## **Data Analysis**

### **Data Processing Techniques**

Qualitative research involves the process of data collection and analysis that is both recursive and dynamic (Merriam, 2009). As a qualitative researcher, I was acting as a careful observer to the participants' life's stories and as such, was able to capture a picture of how the participants interpreted their own specific meanings around romance and fairy-tales.

Data analysis is, "the process of making sense out of the data" (Merriam, 2009, p. 175). This process involved consolidating, reducing, interpreting what people have said and what the researcher has seen and read. This is the meaning making process (Merriam, 2009).



The first step after the raw data was collected, was to transcribe the audio-taped interviews. After each transcription, the data was analyzed more discriminately to begin allocating the data into categories or themes. The themes were either combined or compared. The end goal of data analysis was to find the emergent themes in the context of my research question.

Analyzing the data was an on-going process, that is, until saturation occurred. The analysis began with the interview and continued through to the notes taken by the researcher, the transcriptions of the interview, and ended with the coding of themes. Each participant brought their own lived experiences and views pertaining to romantic relationships and fairy-tale themes. With each participant, it was important to provide enough time and reflection to ensure each answer was exactly what the participant had experienced, felt, or thought. At the conclusion of each interview, the interviews were analyzed word-by-word and line-by-line to ensure proper themes, patterns, and commonalities were being extracted. Furthermore, transcript of each interview was compared and contrasted with the next interview. This was utilized to identify similar words or phrases within the participant's narrative. Comparing the interviews for this purpose was very useful.

Data collection was interpreted utilizing standard qualitative data analysis strategies. Qualitative strategies include: triangulation, peer examination, investigator's position, and the audit trail (Merriam, 2009). The audit trail was used for the study's qualitative analysis. According to Merriam (2009) "an audit trail in a qualitative study describes in detail how data were collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made throughout the inquiry" (p. 223).

First, an audit trail was used to ensure categories were produced and coded correctly. Through the process of listening several times to the audio-taped interviews of the narratives of the participant's lived experiences, the researcher was able to identify and isolate specific themes, patterns, and commonalities that emerged throughout the 10 women's interviews. Side notes were written down during the audio-taping of the interviews when a common theme appeared. Side notes, a form of coding, is useful in identifying any data that may be useful information that might be used when the themes are formulated (Merriam, 2009). This assisted with tracking any patterns produced throughout the interviews. This strategy was used to aid in searching for specific themes that were found within the text of each participant's interview. Twenty one themes were originally formulated, but after further review and refinement, a total of 11 themes were coded throughout the study. Refining the codes included analyzing how many times the theme appeared throughout the study. If there was a limited number, then the theme was discarded or it was combined within another theme. For example, many participants spoke about the "external factors" of fairy-tales. This included coiffed hairstyles, clothing style, beauty, and dancing ability. Instead of having small themes, all these specific themes were placed within the larger theme of "external factors." Furthermore, there was the process of naming each theme. At times this process was easy for example, when the pattern of parental attachment styles was brought up. This theme was named "familial upbringing." A few times it was more difficult to name the themes, such as "external factors" because of the combination of words or phrases into this one specific common theme. The researcher wanted to make sure that each theme was named, created, and combined correctly to ensure easy readability and comprehension of themes. This process was used while listening and re-reading each interview multiple times.

At the conclusion of the interview process, the researcher transcribed all interviews and used a color-coding system on the transcription sheet for each interview to identify specific themes. Next, each theme was transcribed onto a notebook that was then made into a table (see table 3). The researcher compiled the information into different themes that corresponded to the participant's interview question. This researcher began to pull together descriptions of the participant's experiences and the possible meaning making that arose from such. The researcher used a hand written color-coding system to physically code the themes. One color was used for each interview question. When themes, patterns, or commonalities emerged within a specific question, that specific color was used throughout each participant's interview to track and group the themes within the questions. For example, the color green was used for question 1 throughout each participant's interview. When a similar theme appeared within the participant's transcribed interview, the researcher would highlight that particular theme in question 1 with the color green. Question 1 asks, Can you describe your most meaningful experience of your favorite fairy-tale? When a theme began emerging within the participant's answers, it was highlighted in the color green. Not all the participant's answers for question 1 were highlighted, only the answers that emerged as possible themes. This process aided in keeping the themes highlighted within the specific color-coded questions, making it easier to reflect back upon all the themes that appeared throughout the interviews. The themes, then, were transcribed into table 3 for easier access and reference. In the end, the researcher's goal was to create an accurate picture of the participants' life's narrative.

There are different strategies to coding within qualitative research, such as using a computer program specifically produced for coding or one can code the data by hand. Several computer programs have been developed to store, sort, and retrieve qualitative data. Other

researchers have the ability to devise systems utilizing word processing packages or data base programs to assist in the coding process (Merriam, 2009). A popular program used is called CAQDAS which stands for Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software (Merriam, 2009). There are numerous advantages to using CAQDAS. This software offers an “organized filing system, offers a close examination of the data, and the concept mapping feature enables the researcher to visualize the relationship among codes and themes by drawing a visual model” (Merriam, 2009, pp. 195-196). Although this system offers many advantages to the researcher, I chose to code my research by hand because I felt this method offered more insight and a better understanding into the themes and life narratives of the participants.

Within the analysis itself, I used a phenomenological approach, a type of qualitative inquiry, to studying the data. Phenomenology is interested in the “live experiences” of the participants and how these experiences have shaped their thoughts and behaviors (Merriam, 2009). A phenomenological approach was selected due to the intense and emotional human experience that was being studied; love. Retrieving the participant’s thoughts and experiences on this subject was done through the interview process (Merriam, 2009). Throughout the interview it was important to bracket my biases or assumptions. Understanding my own biases before starting this research aided in the bracketing process. Ultimately, the researcher’s goal was to create a solid understanding of the participants’ lived experiences which set the tone for writing the narratives.

All 10 semi-structured interviews were conducted by the researcher. All interviews were tape recorded to ensure accurate recording of answers and then transcribed into written form. Because of the confidential and sensitive material of the interviews, all materials, tape recordings, and notes are stored in a secured lock box and on a personal computer that is

password protected. All confidential material was re-dacted. After 7 years, all data will be erased, shredded, and disposed of in a confidential manner by the researcher. The researcher will follow protocols endorsed by the APA pertaining to securing and storing data.

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## Chapter 4: Results

Ten women who had responded to a recruitment advertisement placed at a mid-western university were interviewed for the purposes of exploring their meaning-making around intimate relationships and fairy-tales. They ranged in age from 25 to 40 years of age. The women's marital statuses showed that two were divorced; four were single; and, four were married. Socio-economic status showed three women earned \$0 to \$10,000 annually; two women earned \$20,000 - \$30,000 annually; four women earned \$50,000 or more annually; and, one woman preferred not to say. Eight of the women were Caucasian, one was Asian, and one was Hispanic. The number of romantic relationships the women recorded was as follows: one woman reported 1 relationship; four women reported 3 relationships; three women reported 4 relationships; and, two women reported 5 relationships. Of the previous relationships mentioned, the number reported for a relationship lasting longer than 1 year in length is the following: three women reported 1 relationship; three women reported 2 relationships; three women reported 3 relationships; and, one woman reported 4 relationships. See table 2 (Appendix F) for the descriptive data.

This researcher anticipated the interviews to last one hour in length, which was stated on the confidentiality form. The interviews ranged between 6 minutes and 12 seconds to 15 minutes and 38 seconds.

### Participant Profiles

Table 2 (Appendix F) provides a descriptive analysis of the participants' demographic backgrounds. Participant profiles are provided for the reader to get a better picture of who these women are and a glimpse of their life experiences thus far. Identifying information is redacted throughout this project, using alphabetical letters as aliases (A-J). This ensures proper

confidentiality was used throughout this project. Lastly, this researcher asked each participant how they identify themselves in regard to sexual orientation. All the participants verbally stated they identified as heterosexual.

Participant A is a 36 year old, Caucasian, divorced mother of 2 children. She is attending graduate school and is concurrently working as a massage therapist. Currently she lives with her ex-husband and two small children (ages 8 and 10 years). Through the course of her life, she has been intimately involved with 3 men, (her ex-husband for 11 years, her high-school boyfriend for 8 years, and her current boyfriend for 6 months). She comes from a loving and secure home environment. She chose the fairy-tale Cinderella to discuss.

Participant B is a 27 year old, Caucasian female. She attends graduate school studying clinical psychology. Currently, she lives alone, but she has been dating her current boyfriend for 2 months. She has had 5 long-term relationships and 1 that was over a year. Her childhood was ideal and loving. She chose the fairy-tale Beauty and the Beast to discuss.

Participant C is a 25 year old, Caucasian female. She attends graduate school studying clinical psychology. Currently she lives with her boyfriend of 4 years. Her childhood was “easy,” she reported, “I was handed anything that I wanted.” Her family is supportive and she comes from a secure upbringing. She identifies with the Cinderella story.

Participant D is a 27 year old, single Caucasian female. She attends graduate school and works part-time at a Pediatric Dental Clinic as a receptionist. She is currently not in a relationship and reports “I don’t expect much from my partners.” She chose Beauty and the Beast to discuss.

Participant E is a 26 year old, married, Caucasian female. She attends graduate school and is currently working part-time at a Community Center. She was brought up in a “very strict Catholic household.” She discussed the Disney Princesses and Aladdin.

Participant F is a 33 year old, single Hispanic female. She attends graduate school and works part-time as a dental hygienist. She was brought up in a close- knit Hispanic household. She lives in the same building as her parents and older sister. She is in contact with her ex- boyfriend of 2 years. She identified with the Cinderella story.

Participant G is a 33 year old, married, Asian female. She attends graduate school part- time and works as a Zumba instructor. She has one 15 year old child from a previous boyfriend and two small children (ages 3 and 5 years) from her current marriage. She discussed Beauty and the Beast.

Participant H is a 40 year old, married, Caucasian female. She attends graduate school part-time and works in a hospital. She has two children, (ages 12 and 9 years). She was brought up in a Catholic household. Her familial relationships are good. She reported that she did not watch many fairy- tales when younger and did not specifically identify any fairy-tales to discuss. When discussing her daughter she stated, “I didn’t want her to have the whole Prince Charming coming to rescue me thing.” Although her daughter watched all the fairy-tales, H did not push fairy-tales on her daughter.



Participant I is a 39 year old, divorced, Caucasian female. She attends graduate school part- time and works as a bartender. She has one child (age 12 years) from her previous relationship. She is an adventurous person, one who is not looking for a “white picket fence, suburban life-style.” She did not identify with a specific fairy-tale, but instead focused on how fairy-tales may be damaging to women.

Participant J is a 36 year old, married, Caucasian female. She attends graduate school and works in cosmetics part- time. She has a son from a previous relationship. She was raised in a strict Catholic household. She reported she has experienced emotional and verbal abuse from former partners. She identified with Cinderella.

## Themes

Based upon common ideas that were expressed throughout the interview, numerous themes were evident (Table 3, Appendix F). Pertaining to the idea of meaningful experiences as they related to a fairy-tale, many of the women chose *Cinderella* and *Beauty and the Beast*. In relation to these fairy-tales, the theme of *Prince Charming* coming to rescue the women, *external factors* such as: the beautiful make-up and fancy dresses that were worn by the princess or heroine were envied by the participants, and being swept off one’s feet were mimicked throughout the thought processes of the participants. Participant E stated, “I think I just really like how they (the princesses) were always swept off their feet by someone and it was immediate. They never had to second-guess anyone. It just worked right away.” Moreover, Participant F stated, “my first relationship, it was like the whole, ‘oh, he swept me off my feet and it’s like a love story.’ I thought it was going to be my happily ever after type

of thing.” Participants B, C, and D remembered more of the external factors that played a role in their fantasy. Participant B related, “I always looked at Belle, as a child I thought that’s what adult females are and that’s what I kinda always looked up to women being. You know, having your make-up perfect and your hair all pretty.”

A third theme was linked to *status*. Many of the women expressed that when they were younger, fairy-tales influenced how they thought their lives would be once they were older; hence, the image of status, the castle, and royalty. When looking back at her childhood, one woman stated, “people should base their relationships on status, looks, but they should always look to see who that person is.” Participant D made a poignant statement regarding status,

That fairy-tale (Cinderella) was probably a bad fairy-tale because now that I’m older and looking back I can see that life isn’t about having that luxury life, that grandeur. But in that fairy-tale (Cinderella) it made it seem that that’s what life was. You were either a work horse or you were the other. Unfortunately, I think I believed that for a long time, that if you weren’t in that grandeur thing than you were the other. I really do think that was an underlying thing in a serious relationship that I had, it probably wasn’t a good influence at all.

Many of the participants also discussed how their *familial upbringing*, attachment style, was and the way in which their *parents* treated one another played a role in how these women shaped their lives and their outlook on relationships. For example, participant H stated, “my parents

were about working together for our family.” Furthermore, participant B expressed a similar statement,

Looking at how my parents were while I was growing up. My dad was very supportive and affectionate towards my mom. I looked up to that and always thought, you know, you should have a man that treats you well and that’s how I have always held up standards to the people I have dated to be at-least as even keeled as how I have seen my dad treat my mom.

Lastly, Participant A stated, “my mom and dad had a very good romantic relationship. My parents were a good example.”

*Respect* was a theme that emerged throughout the interview, specifically when asked to describe how their actual experiences of intimacy have reflected their fantasies or expectations. A few statements that best capture what the women were describing are as follows,

I think it’s kinda along the lines of being treated well, respected. I think, um, that’s my expectations to have that respect. Fantasies, I don’t know, I guess like kinda having that happily ever after, that still rings true, but at a more realistic level than when I was a kid.

Moreover, another participant stated,

My husband now treats me the way I have always imagined growing up. He treats me intimately the way I would

fantasize when I was younger, you know, gentle sweet, um, a form of respect instead of it being just all about them. There's respect there.

Lastly, another woman discussed respect as,

If you don't have respect, you have nothing. I think if you're in a relationship where you are not respected on a day to day level and a sexual level, um, it seems to me what I have found is that somebody that treats you intimately like you are there for their pleasure, kinda makes a woman feel very unfulfilled and in my case I felt very much like dirt like an object, unworthy, just sub-level of where I thought I should be. It feels like when somebody respects you for the person you are and respects you intimately its much more positive, you feel good, you feel like a woman, you feel on top of the world no matter what. Money and stuff like that doesn't matter.

When asked what intimacy means to them, many women expressed *communication*, honesty, and being open with the other in the relationship. When further questioned about what intimacy means to them, the women expressed *commitment* to one another and a *connection*, both emotionally and physically with their partner. Participant A stated,

Intimacy to me is being completely open and honest, um willing to talk out whatever it is that you expect or want from your partner, just sharing something with that person that you haven't shared with somebody else, intimacy to me is

the number one fulfilling thing for me.

Lastly, when asked to describe how they felt about being a woman in the context of a relationship, the topic of being an *independent*, self-sufficient woman who was not dependent upon their partner for survival, was a main theme for a majority of the participants.

To view the 11 themes, see Table 3, Themes (Appendix F).

## Chapter 5: Discussion

Ten women were interviewed about their experiences, thoughts, and feelings pertaining to intimate relationships and fairy-tales. Thoughts on this topic were elicited from 11 open-ended, semi-structured interview questions that were produced solely by this researcher. Eleven themes emerged throughout the interviews. The themes were Cinderella/Beauty and the Beast, Prince Charming, External Factors, Status, Familial Upbringing, Parents, Respect, Communication, Commitment, Connection, and Independence.

This researcher investigated women's thoughts, feelings, and experiences of fairy-tales and intimate relationship patterns. The question that was explored throughout this study was the following: How do traditional fairy-tales impact a woman's expectations and meaning making in the context of intimate relationships? A discussion of the results and an evaluation of the psychological themes that were found within the participant's answers will be discussed.

Central to many of these women's childhood experiences, the women fantasized about a life that would be filled with grandeur, fashion, and romance. Although this may be common when a child, other factors played a role in shaping who these women are today, such as family, future relationships and life experience.

### **Fairy-Tale**

The desire for a fairy-tale life could be a reflection of the collective unconscious of the American culture. Society, as well as, the personal psyche may gain a resurgence of hope and optimism in terms of romance and relationship that parallels the image of the fairy-tale life. Many of the participants in this study expressed how two specific fairy-tales, Cinderella and Beauty and the Beast, had an impact on the way they viewed their world as children and how they envisioned their adult world. Participant A specifically identified with the character

Cinderella and how she changed her life and found her Prince Charming. Another participant identified with Cinderella through all the housework and chores that were placed upon Cinderella and her-self as a child. Others enjoyed the external factors such as the fancy dresses, pretty hair, and the ability to dance well. Although the images were recounted from childhood all of these women were able to distinguish between a fairy-tale fantasy and real life. For instance, one participant stated, "In a fairy-tale everything goes smoothly and perfect and in real life it's not like that at all." Another participant discussed her childhood fantasies of falling in love with the wealthy prince and how, as an adult, life is difficult, "it's not like that at all. You have to work on it (marriage)." Over the past decade, there has been a rise in the desire for achieving a fairy-tale life (Zipes, 2006). This includes, but is not limited to romance, wealth, beauty, and luxury (Zipes, 2006). The same desire as Zipes (2006) found can also be seen within the participants own desires within their adult lives.

## **Culture**

Being exposed to the literalization of folklore and fairy-tales at an early age, may have an impact on how women shape their lives. Many popular fairy-tales promote unhealthy sex stereotypes such as: Cinderella, Snow White, and Sleeping Beauty. Many of the participants touched upon how Cinderella, in particular, played a role in their younger lives, but it did not necessarily promote any unhealthy aspects of their adult lives, as the literature has suggested. All of the participants work at a job and are attending school simultaneously. Possibly this mindset of achieving an independent lifestyle, one where the women do not necessarily have to depend upon their partner, is becoming the norm versus how the American culture was a few decades ago. Furthermore, the process of inner growth that many of these women are experiencing could also affect how they view themselves and their partners. Fairy-tales express

women as being dependent upon the prince, the participants within this study did not identify with that specific fairy-tale aspect. Possibly, using modern day Disney movies such as Shrek or Brave would express the collective American psyche pertaining to women's role and how it has changed from a Cinderella syndrome to a more independent lifestyle. One participant expressed this sentiment by stating, "I wear the pants in the relationship." Another participant stated, "I see myself as a very strong dominating woman. I couldn't or wouldn't be passive. I'm more aggressive, so if I want something I usually fight to go get it." This is in contrast to Severin (2003) who investigated fairy-tales and their cultural impact on American society and found that,

The resentment of this narrowing of women's choices to marriage, as well as the price exacted on women who refused to follow cultural dictates," does place women in a negative stance compared to their counterparts who are getting married, sustaining long term relationships, and staying in that 'domesticity' lifestyle. (p. 204)

The participants' marital status varied from being single to being divorced. With that said, this study did not show a relationship between single women's experiences and married women's experiences as Severin (2003) had found. Interestingly, all the women in this study, at one point or another espoused the fantasy of being in a committed, healthy, respected relationship. They did not view their status as negative, but instead, viewed their own world as a work in progress toward their own goals and wants in life, hence the continued process of individuation.

### **Media and Entertainment**

Psychological effects of mass communication on people's thoughts and behavior are pervasive within American society and how this plays a role in women's relationship patterns may be evident from how women behave and construct their relationships based upon this



mirage of what intimacy and love should look like (Bonds- Raacke, 2006). Participant C touched upon this construct of women being put into a specific role when it comes to intimacy, she stated,

It's an extremely hard job for us because being intimate means you have to fit the role in order to be intimate. You have to be cool enough, kind enough, smart enough to want someone to be intimate with you. And then you have to have the body to go along with that and you have to perform in a certain way. With men, they have to have the body, but they don't have to necessarily be as sexy as women or they are not expected to put on certain things or maybe surprise someone with something like lingerie. There is more put on us than on men, the different aspects of it. There's just not a lot of talk about what men can do.

Shapiro and Kroeger (1991) found, "individuals who are more exposed to the popular romantic media will have more dysfunctional/ unrealistic beliefs about intimate relationships" (p. 227). The behavior and thinking that is related to intimate relationships may have evolved over time due to the collective consciousness that media represents and the collective unconscious as it unfolds. These patterns, then, may be played out repeatedly with each relationship mimicking the last.

## Female's Intimate Relationships

The mother-infant bond is where an individual will first learn about love. Attachment theory's basic premise is that early experiences with caregivers will affect one's functioning in later (romantic) relationships (Bowlby, 1969). In comparison with Bowlby (1969), this research found that many of the women expressed how their parents and their family upbringing had an impact on their views about intimacy and what they wanted and looked for in their own relationships when they came into adulthood. Many participants expressed how they watched the interactions between their parents and this is how they learned about intimacy and relationship. Some of the participants' statements are as follows, "my mom and dad had a very good romantic relationship, and they have very good communication. So my perception on other relationships is communication, intimacy, um that person being your best friend. My parents were a good example. Another example,

Even looking at how my parents were while I was growing up. They were really, like, my dad was really supportive and very affectionate with my mom and just always helping her out and supporting her. I looked up to that and always thought, you know, you should have a man that treats you well and that's how I have always held up standards to the people I have dated to be at-least as even keeled as how I have seen my dad treat my mom.

Another participant stated, "My parents were more about working together for our family." It is evident that familial relationships play an important role for learning how to cultivate relationships with peers, partners, and friends. This research also shows that women are more

likely to learn from the goings-on within the family dynamics than watching fairy- tales, as some researchers had found.

### **Female Identity Development**

Intimacy plays a pivotal role in the formation of one's identity, specifically a female's sense of self. Possible early experiences of intimacy may play a role in how women view themselves and the other when engaging in intimacy. Moreover, the inner growth process that aids in one's identity construction is a major variable to consider when examining women's lived experiences. Many participants in this study expressed how self-respect was a major factor for themselves in-relation to their partner. Participant J stated:

If you don't have respect, you have nothing.  
I think if you're in a relationship where you are not respected on a day to day level and a sexual level, um, it seems to me what I have found is that somebody that treats you intimately like you are there for their pleasure, kinda makes a woman feel very unfulfilled and in my case I felt very much like dirt like an object, unworthy, just sub-level of where I thought I should be. It feels like when somebody respects you for the person you are and respects intimately its much more positive, you feel good, you feel like a woman, you feel on top of the world no matter what. Money and stuff like that doesn't matter.

Along with respect, many participants discussed communication and commitment as important aspects that aid in one's development of the relationship and self. Participant A stated,

Communication and honesty are number one with me.

Loyalty, honesty, communication, in my specific instance the communication is unbelievable. We talk about everything, all the time. That's been different from my past relationships, um, and affection is huge to me.

Previous research (Bartoszuk & Pittman , 2010) has shown that females are more prone to the inter-personal dynamics of the relationship and males are focused on intra-personal aspects. Some of the participants expressed these views on inter-personal dynamics such as; sitting on the couch and snuggling, kissing, holding hands, and being open and honest with each other.

### **Jung's Theory of the Shadow**

Absorbing all elements from birth into adulthood, one will accumulate a vast amount of images, thoughts, and desires adding to the manifestation of unconscious material. Jungian theory provides a meaningful lens from which the unconscious may be understood in the context of the development of the self and the psychological meaning of fairy-tales. Jung (1959) defined the Shadow as, "a moral problem that challenges the whole ego personality. To become conscious of it involves recognizing the dark aspects of the personality as present and real" (p. 8). Jung's concept of the Shadow provides relevance when examining the female's intimate relational patterns.

We all project onto the closest person in our lives. Some of the participants showed this projection of their Shadow when they talked about searching for a Prince Charming. Participant F illustrates the Shadow and projection, “the Prince Charming came along and you know, it was like the perfect scene of ‘oh I’m going to get married.’” She related this thought as she was reminiscing about her first relationship. The thoughts and images of being rescued and the ease of falling into a relationship were real for this participant. The Shadow and projection can also be played out when women leave a bad relationship and enter a healthy relationship. Participant J shared about her life experience of being married to an abusive partner and the longing she felt to get out of the relationship as well as the isolation she felt when married. In her present relationship, the projections of her past marriage play out, in that, she projects her insecurities onto her current partner, which activates her Shadow side to come through. The inability to recognize and be conscious of her Shadow side is providing conflict within the relationship. Relating back to intimacy, if her husband refuses to be intimate, she immediately gets angry (her Shadow coming through) which results in an argument. All the participants discussed how they want healthy, positive relationships, and how working with one another provides a good starting point to achieving their ideal relationship.

### **Anima/Animus**

Every individual has aspects that are feminine and masculine; these forms are referred to as the Anima and Animus. When the female or male starts to fantasize or mythologize in a way that is the opposite of how they behave or think, it is the unconscious part of their anima/animus that is trying to be seen or heard (Hillman, 1974). The female may wish or dream for her prince, but when the fantasy does not materialize, she is disappointed again by her own unconscious desires. One participant illustrates this point,

In a significant relationship that I had, that was the basis why I got married to that person, because they created that financial cushion where I never really had to worry, but there's a price to pay for that. That was probably a bad notion, I knew getting married that it wasn't for the right reasons, he was just a provider, I wasn't able to do those things on my own.

She related this to how fairy-tales show a luxurious lifestyle and a happily-ever-after, which she wanted, but it was unsuccessful. She was disappointed that her fantasy did not materialize.

Today, she is replaying this myth and is being disappointed repeatedly.

### **Psychotherapy**

The issue of psychotherapy was not a discussion topic with the participants however, many if not all the participants would benefit from exploring a deeper meaning of how they view their current relationship, past relationships, or future relationships. Some psychodynamic therapists will incorporate the use of fairy-tales to uncover further unconscious material that might be hindering the woman's psychological growth.

### **Implications of Findings**

The conceptualization of fairy-tales, intimacy and meaning-making for women that was gathered in this study through women's experiences may increase our conceptual understanding of individuals' life experiences and how this aids in the development of self both emotionally and psychologically. The themes extrapolated from the participants represent a glimpse into how some women may perceive relationships and their role in intimacy and how other aspects have an impact on forming an individual's thought process, sense of self, and life.

### **Limitation of the Study**

The limitations of this qualitative study are that it examined the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of women. Recruitment was conducted by placing advertisements at a university and it happened that all the women who chose to participate were enrolled in a graduate program. This presents limitations to the data. Utilizing all women may show different results for example, examining stay-at-home mother's perspectives on fairy-tales and romance. Another limitation was the lack of a male viewpoint in the discussion. Many of the women openly expressed interest in knowing how men would have answered the interview questions. Another limitation is that only heterosexual women were interviewed. Including other orientations may have enhanced the study. Furthermore, expanding the age limit may provide other viewpoints, which may result in differences between women in their early 20's versus perspectives of older women of for example, 80.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

Any investigator wishing to research further on fairy-tales and intimate relationships may want to think about a male's perspective. Some research is already showing the differences between men and women, interpersonal dynamics and intrapersonal dynamics. Furthermore, one could use fairy-tales and relationships with school-aged children. Since this is when individuals are most susceptible to the imagery and imagination of how life might look when they reach adulthood, gaining children's perspectives and thought processes may prove for some interesting findings. Future research can benefit from interviewing larger samples from a broader socioeconomic and multicultural population as well. Seeking out women who identify as homosexual or bisexual may also provide a unique perspective pertaining to intimacy. Research

that includes interviews with clinicians who utilize fairy-tale and myth is suggested, particularly in the context of romantic relationships.

## **Conclusion**

This study set out to explore what themes would emerge when women were asked about their reflections regarding traditional fairy-tales in the context of intimate relationships. From early childhood, many women have read fairy-tales or have watched romantic stories enacted through films. Growing up with the archetypal images of prince and princesses, castles, and true love may create a fantasy world that women set out to obtain. Due to the proliferation of fairy-tales in media and popular culture, it is difficult for many women to escape notions of romantic love, and the grandiosity of imagination. Because of these fairy-tales filtering through into our collective unconscious, the female is often unaware of the power of these stories and how our culture may perpetuate their myths of ‘happily-ever-after’ relationships. Love is real; however, the essence behind the love may affect the female’s relationship. Furthermore, utilizing Jung’s concepts of Shadow, Anima, and Animus provide a unique look into how individuals behave and think on a conscious and unconscious level. This also provided insight into how one may act within a relationship and the psychological motivation behind the behavior.

Utilizing the fairy-tale as a springboard for bringing unconscious issues forward may help the female to reorganize her thoughts in a more productive, “true” way versus an imagined way. This study sought to understand, then, how romantic fairy-tale themes may have influenced the way in which women perceive their role and the role of the other in intimate relationships and how these expectations color the development of the female identity and the meaning making that arises from such.



The themes that emerged from this study were Cinderella, Beauty and the Beast, Prince Charming, External Factors, Status, Familial Upbringing, Parents, Respect, Communication, Commitment, Connection, and Independence. This research has shown that fairy-tales did have an impact on some of the women's adult lives, in addition to other factors such as: the attachment and parental relationship that many of the participants mirror within their present relationships.

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## Appendix A: Main Interview Questions

Does identifying with traditional fairy-tales impact a female's intimate relationship patterns?

Instruments: The instruments used during this study were a semi-structured interview that was produced solely by the researcher. The interview consisted of 11 open-ended questions which explored relationships, romantic love and fairy-tales.

1. Can you describe your most meaningful experience of your favorite fairy-tale.
2. What about these fairy-tales did you specifically identify with?
3. Was there a fairy-tale character that you identified with in particular?
4. How do you think this fairy-tale may influence your view of intimate relationships?
5. Reflecting back to your childhood, can you describe any perceived beliefs you had about romance?
6. In what ways have your beliefs about intimacy/romantic love changed overtime from childhood to adulthood?
7. Describe how your actual experience of intimacy/romantic love has reflected your fantasies? Expectations?
8. Can you describe your thoughts and feelings about intimacy, in general?
9. What does intimacy mean to you?
10. How do you feel about being a woman in the context of romantic relationships?
11. Is there anything else you would like to address regarding being a woman and intimacy?



## Appendix B: Demographic Questionnaire

A.) Age:

B.) Marital Status: (Please circle one of the options below)

Married    Divorced    Single    Widow    Prefer not to say

C.) Ethnicity: (Please circle the ethnicity that you identify with)

Caucasian    African American    Asian    Hispanic    Other    Prefer not to say

D.) Socio Economic Status: (Please circle the Socio Economic Status that you earned within the 2013 fiscal year)

\$0- \$10,000    \$10,001- \$20,000    \$20,001- \$30,000    \$30,001- \$40,000    \$40,001-\$50,000

\$50,001 and over    Prefer not to say

E.) Highest level of education:

F.) Number of romantic relationships: (Please note, for the purposes of this study, romantic relationships are when both people were intimately involved for at-least 3 months)

G.) How many of these relationships were over 1 year in length?

H.) What is your gender identification?

Heterosexual    Homosexual    Bi-sexual    Prefer not to say

## Appendix C: Recruitment Advertisement

*Once Upon a Time...*

*Happily Ever After...*

*Love's First Kiss...*

I am a doctorate student collecting data on women's perspectives about romance and fairy-tales. My study has been approved by Antioch University, Santa Barbara IRB committee.

I am looking for 10 women between the ages of 25 and 40 years old to be participants. This study seeks to understand how romantic fairy-tale themes may impact the way in which women perceive their role and the role of the other in intimate relationships and how these expectations color the development of the female identity and the meaning-making that arises from such.

This research project will be closely monitored by my chair, Juliet Rohde-Brown, Ph.D. The interview should take no longer than 1 hour. Participation is greatly appreciated!

For the participant's time, each individual will receive Starbucks coffee coupons.

Please contact, Mandy, at the phone number or email below if interested in being a-part of this study.

*Mandy, XXX-XXX-XXXX or XXXX@XXXX*

*Once Upon A Time...*

*Happily Ever After...*

*Love's First Kiss...*

## Appendix D: Consent Form



Project Title: Enchanted: A Qualitative Phenomenological Examination of Fairy-Tales and Women's Intimate Relational Patterns.

Project Investigator: Amanda Schnibben

Dissertation Chair: Dr. Juliet Rhode-Brown

1. I understand that this study is of a research nature. It may offer no direct benefit to me.

Participation in this study is voluntary. I may refuse to enter it or may withdraw at any time without creating any harmful consequences to myself. I understand also that the investigator may drop me at any time from the study.

The purpose of this study is: This study seeks to understand how romantic fairy-tale themes may impact the way in which women perceive their role and the role of the other in intimate relationships and how these expectations color the development of the female identity and the meaning-making that arises from such.

As a participant in the study, I will be asked to take part in the following procedures:

1. Answer 11 semi-structured, open-ended interview questions pertaining to romantic relationships and fairy-tales. This will take approximately 1 hour of time.

Each participant in the study will take approximately 1 hour of the researcher's time for a total of 10 hours of the researcher's time. The interviews will take place in a secure conference room at Schaumburg Illinois Public library.

1. The risks, discomforts and inconveniences of the above procedures might be:
  - a. Talking about past relationships that might be uncomfortable to discuss which may elicit anxiety or a re-traumatization as memories are triggered during the interview.

The possible benefits of the procedure might be (interviewee):

- a. To find out more about the individual/self in terms of past romantic relationship patterns.

Direct benefit to researcher:

- b. To aid in my research on fairy- tales and relationships. These interviews will provide a more in depth look at how women view their own relationships and if any, connections to fairy-tales.

Benefits to others:

The outcome of this research will add to the pool of knowledge pertaining to intimate relationships, women's identity, and fairy-tale stories.

Confidentiality of Participants:

All personal information that was obtained throughout this project by the use of demographic questionnaires and audio- taped interviews was re-dacted and stored in a secured, locked box and on a password protected personal computer. In all written materials and oral presentations in which I might use materials from your participation, I will not use your name, names of people close to you, or any other identifying information. Transcripts were typed using your appointed alphabetical letter in place of your real name. All information is stored for a minimum of 7 years at the end of the study, or if the study gets published, then 7 years after the publication date in which all information will be shredded. Agreeing to participate in this study constitutes a contract to abide by these rules of confidentiality.

Information about the study was discussed with me by Mandy Schnibben. If I have further questions, I can call her at XXX-XXX-XXX or email at XXX@XXXXX.

Though the purpose of this study is primarily to fulfill the researcher, Mandy Schnibben's, requirement to complete a formal research project as a dissertation at Antioch University, the researcher may intend to include the data and results of the study in future scholarly publications and presentations. Our confidentiality agreement, as articulated above, will be effective in all cases of data sharing."

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Sign \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E: Definition of Terms

- 1.) **Anima/Animus:** Anima is feminine and animus is masculine (Jung, 1973).
- 2.) **Archetype:** Mythological components (Jung, 1949, p.72).
- 3.) **Collective Unconscious:** The deepest and most extensive area of psyche, a point of contact between the individual and the transpersonal life forces (McGuigan, 2009, p. 352).
- 4.) **Identity:** The stable, consistent, and reliable sense of who one is and what one stands for as a contributing member of society (p.87).
- 5.) **Imagination:** Act or power of forming a mental image; creative ability (Merriam's Pocket Dictionary, 2006, p. 170).
- 6.) **Intimacy:** The interpersonal process within which two interaction partners experience and express feelings, communicate verbally and nonverbally, satisfy social motives, augment or reduce social fears, talk and learn about themselves and their unique characteristics, and become "close," (Collins & Sroufe, 1999, p. 126).
- 7.) **Self:** An archetype that represents the unifications of the unconsciousness and consciousness of an individual. The creation of the self occurs through a process known as individuation, in which the various aspects of personality are integrated.
- 8.) **Shadow:** A moral problem that challenges the whole ego personality. To become conscious of it involves recognizing the dark aspects of the personality as present and real (Jung, 1959, p.8).

## Appendix F: Tables

Epistemological Perspectives

	Positivist	Interpretive	Critical	Postmodern
Purpose	Predict, Control, Generalize	Describe, Understand, Interpret	Change, Emancipate, Empower	Deconstruct, Problematize, Question, Interpret
Types	Experimental Survey, Quasi-Experiment	Phenomenology, Ethnography, Hermeneutic, Grounded Theory, Naturalistic/Qualitative	Neo-Marxist, Feminist Participatory Action, Research (PAR), Criticalrace Theory, Critical Ethnography	Postcolonial, Post-Structural, Postmodern, Queer Theory
Reality	Objective, External, Out There	Multiple Realities, Context- Bound	Multiple Realities, Situated in Political, Social, Cultural Contexts (one reality is privileged)	Questions and assumptions that there is a place where reality resides: "Is there a There?"

Merriam, S.B. (2009). *Qualitative Research: A guide to design and implementation*. Jossey-Boss, San Francisco, CA.

Table 2

Demographic Information

Alias	Gender	Age	Ethnicity	Marital Status	Economic	# of Rx's	Rx's over 1yr
A	Female	36	Caucasian	Divorced	\$0-\$10,000	3	2
B	Female	27	Caucasian	Single	\$0-\$10,000	5	1
C	Female	25	Caucasian	Single	\$0-\$10,000	4	1
D	Female	27	Caucasian	Single	\$20,000-\$30,000	1	1
E	Female	26	Caucasian	Married	\$20,000-\$30,000	4	2
F	Female	33	Hispanic	Single	\$50,000 +	3	3
G	Female	35	Asian	Married	\$50,000 +	5	2
H	Female	40	Caucasian	Married	\$50,000 +	4	4
I	Female	39	Caucasian	Divorced	\$50,000 +	3	3
J	Female	36	Caucasian	Married	prefer not to say	3	3

Table 3

Identification of Themes

<u>Themes</u>	<u>Repeating Thoughts</u>
Cinderella/ Beauty and the Beast	Having the opportunity to go to the ball, outer beauty, inner beauty,
Prince Charming	Being rescued, being swept off my feet
External Factors	Pretty dresses, perfect hair, looking perfect
Status	Luxurious lifestyle, castles, royalty
Familial Upbringing	Catholic religious affiliation
Parents	Secure attachment, loving bond between parents
Respect	Self respect as a woman
Communication	Open, honest communication between partners
Commitment	Sharing lives together
Connection	More than just intimate relations, being best friends, knowing the person inside and out
Independence	Not depending on the other, having a career



