PASSIVELY EVER AFTER

Representation of Women in Disney's Enchanted

Bachelor's thesis

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract

Sadut saattavat vaikuttaa viattomalta viihteeltä, mutta niiden tehtävä ei ole pelkästään viihdyttää. Sadut muun muassa tarjoavat toivottavan ja ei-toivottavan käyttäytymisen kaavoja palkitsemalla sankarit ja rankaisemalla roistoja. Satuja on usein kritisoitu niiden naiskuvista. Etenkin Disneyn saduissa sankarittaret esitetään usein passiivisina, avuttomina kaunottarina. Lisäksi useissa saduissa sankarittarella on vastassaan roistotar, joka puolestaan esitetään aktiivisena ja itsenäisenä naisena.

Sosiaalikonstructionistisen kielikäsityksen mukaan kieli rakentaa todellisuuttamme. Niinpä esimerkiksi satujen tarjoamat representaatiot eivät pelkästään heijasta nykyisiä naiskuviamme, vaan myös rakentavat sitä millaisena naiseus nähdään ja millaista naiseutta pidetään hyväksyttävänä. Koska Disneyn filmatisointien yleisöt ovat usein varsin laajoja, on tärkeää tarkastella kriittisesti Disneyn tarjoamia representaatioita.

Tutkimuksessani pyrin kartoittamaan Disneyn Lumottu-elokuvan naisten representaatioita käyttäen apunani kriittistä diskurssintutkimusta. Tarkoitukseni on selvittää, esitetäänkö sadun sankarittaret yhä passiivisina, avuttomina kaunottarina vai onnistuuko elokuva haastamaan vanhat representaatiot.

Analyysini osoitti, että kaikki tarinan naiset esitettiin kauniina ja ulkonäöstään hyötyvinä. Kuitenkin vain roistotar käytti ulkonäköään tietoisesti hyväkseen. Aktiivisuus jakoi elokuvan naiset varsin perinteiseen ja paljon kritisoituun tapaan: Sankarittaret olivat passiivisia, olipa kyseessä parisuhteen kohtalosta päättäminen tai onnellisen elämän etsiminen. Roistotar puolestaan pyrki aktiivisesti saavuttamaan päämääränsä. Avuttomuuden ja riippuvaisuuden suhteen elokuvan naiskolmikko oli melko monimuotoinen. Roistotar ja yksi tarinan hyvistä naisista olivat varsin itsenäisiä, mutta tarinan varsinainen sankaritar oli jatkuvasti riippuvainen miesten tarjoamasta avusta. Kaikki elokuvan naiset esitettiin taloudellisesti riippumattomina. Naisten esittäminen taloudellisesti riippumattomina oli yksi ainoista löydöistäni, joka mahdollisesti haastaa vanhoja representaatioita. Muuten Disneyn Lumottu-elokuva ei juuri haastanut naisten representaatioiden usein kritisoituja piirteitä, vaan päätyi toistamaan niitä.

Asiasanat – Keywords critical discourse analysis, feminist media studies, fairy tales, representation
Säilytyspaikka – Depository
Muita tietoja – Additional information

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1. INTRODUCTION

We all know the story: a damsel in distress, saved by a generous passer-by. A princess locked in a tower, waiting for a knight in a shining armour to save her. Never in the story does the princess decide to spend her time trying to find her own way out instead of dreaming of a prince or a knight to come to the rescue. Fairy tales are a part of our culture, and in the past decades they have spread from books to new media. Thanks to Disney, many of us enjoy our fairy tales in the form of animations. Fairy tale plots and characters have found their way to mainstream films, as well.

Fairy tales entertain children and adults alike. Often the happy endings and saturated colours of fairy tales convince us of their innocence. But fairy tales are not only entertaining, they also educate us about the ways of our culture by offering us social scripts and telling us about the possible consequences of following them. Studying fairy tales therefore makes it possible to trace changes in the values of a society.

Fairy tales teach us lessons. While some of those lessons are quite easy to decrypt, some are less apparent. Most of us know, for example, that the lesson in The Little Red Riding Hood is not to trust strangers, but what is the lesson in Snow White or in Sleeping Beauty? Fairy tales have been accused of sustaining patriarchal values by teaching women to be passive and silent. The idea that such tales might not be beneficial for women is by no means a new one. According to Stone (1989: 229-230), even early feminist writers such as Simone de Beauvoir and Betty Friedan found that fairy tales lead women to passively wait for their "Prince Charming" instead of taking control of their own lives.

In 2007 Disney published a film called Enchanted, a modern-day fairy tale that borrows much of its characters and plot twists from previous Disney classics, such as Snow White and Cinderella. Enchanted is a partly animated film about a princess-to-be, Giselle, who is about to get married, when the stepmother of the prince sends Giselle to Manhattan. In Manhattan Giselle falls in love with Robert, a divorce attorney who tries to help her find her way back home. In this study I will look at the representation of women in Enchanted.

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

In this chapter I will discuss the theoretical background of my study. I will first explain the central concepts used in my analysis, which stem mostly from Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Especially the concept of representation and the view that language constructs our reality are central to my study. After introducing some of the main ideas of CDA, I will move on to discuss feminist approaches to the research of the media. The representation of women has been a central point of interest in Feminist Media Studies since the 1970's. The idea of language as constructing rather than reflecting reality has changed the questions that are being asked in Feminist Media Studies, but the importance of studying representations remains unchanged. Finally, I will introduce the particular genre under the scrutiny of this study, that is, the fairytale genre. The data of my study is Enchanted, a recent film from the Walt Disney Company, and it is situated in the genre of fairy tales. After a brief look at the functions of fairy tales, I will discuss the importance and ideology of the Walt Disney Company. I will end the chapter by presenting some previous studies on fairy tales and on Disney that relate to this paper.

2.1. Critical Discourse Analysis and representation

My analysis is grounded in some of the basic views and concepts of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Critical Discourse Analysis is an approach that views language as social practice, pays attention to the context of language use and is interested in the relation of language and power (Wodak & Meyer 2002: 1-2). CDA's wide conception of language and its interest in revealing social inequalities through a careful analysis of language make it a useful tool for feminist analyses of media texts.

The very basis of my analysis lies in the social constructionist conception of language. In CDA, language is considered more than a simple system of communicating meanings; it is a means of constructing reality (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen 2009: 12). We use language to express ourselves and to describe the world around us, and in doing so we construct our reality. CDA understands language as more than words; language is a social practice (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen 2009: 12) that encompasses the non-verbal elements (for instance gestures and pictures) of creating meanings as well. In other words, language is considered social and multisemiotic. This view of language is effective in the analysis of films because they

construct meanings using a number of semiotic means.

Language is used to describe the world, but some descriptions are more widely accepted or established than others. In CDA, these persistent ways of describing the world in a certain way and from a certain point of view are called discourses (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen 2009: 27). Discourses are established ways of speaking, which carry with them assumptions about the world. One of the main functions of discourses is representation (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen 2009: 52). Discourses always represent the world from a particular point of view. In each representation, some views are favoured above others and some are left out altogether. Hence, representations can never be neutral. As Fairclough (1997: 136) points out, representations are merely versions of reality, not reflections of it. Since our view of reality can only be constructed from the representations that we have, representations are important "places of power" (Pietikäinen & Mäntynen 2009: 52) and thus an important subject of analysis.

One of the fundamental ideas of CDA is that language has power and that language is used for maintaining power relations. Pietikäinen and Mäntynen (2009: 53) locate the power of language in its ability to shape our conception of the world and people and represent them as 'real'. According to Fairclough (1997: 25) ideologies often work through common sense assumptions and contribute to maintaining or changing the relations of power. If the power of language comes from its ability to represent the world as real and its power relations as natural, then ideologies maintain these representations. For example, promoting the assumption that men and women are naturally different and complement each other is a common way of maintaining and reinforcing heterosexual ideology.

Analysing representations is not straightforward because representations are constructed at all levels of language use and because what is not said can be as important as what is. Fairclough (1997: 137) suggests that the analysis of representations should aim for a description of the network of choices within which the representations are constructed. According to Fairclough (1997: 136) attention should be paid to what has been included and what has been excluded in the representation, what has been expressed explicitly and what has been expressed implicitly, what is seen as primary and what as secondary, and so on. In my study I will try to follow Fairclough's suggestion to not only look at what is included or explicit but also at what is excluded or implicit in the representation of women in Disney's Enchanted.

2.2. Feminist Media Studies

Feminist media criticism dates back to around the 1970s (Gill 2007: 9). According to Gill (2007: 9-10), the representation of women in the media has been an issue of feminist critique from early on. Although both the media and feminism have changed in many ways during the last few decades and new areas of interest have arisen, the issue of representation is still a significant theme in Feminist Media Studies. Both Mills (1995: 1) and Gill (2007: 1) assert that gender representations are an important subject of research.

The understanding of the relationship between representation and reality has changed in the past decades. Early feminists strongly opposed some of the representations of women in the media because they felt that these representations were distorted and unrealistic reflections of 'real' women. However, as Paasonen (2010: 44) points out, questioning the accuracy or actuality of representations is rather futile because all representations have their specific perspective and they all limit the subject they represent. There is, in fact, no such thing as a "correct" representation of women nor can there ever be one.

The present day approaches of Feminist Media Studies are no longer concerned with how realistic a representation is. This is due to the post-structuralist idea that instead of reflecting reality, representations construct it (Gill 2007: 12). Therefore, the "truthfulness" of representations is not only impossible to define but also insignificant, as representations nevertheless construct reality. For instance, de Lauretis (1987: 18) sees the media as a technology of gender, which constructs our (self-)representations through its representations of gender. The ways we "perform our gender" (see e.g. Butler 1990) are adaptations of the ways we see gender being performed (in the media and elsewhere) by others. Gender is as much a matter of social construction as is any other categorization of people. That it appears as a natural division, the self-evident assumption of the difference between men and women only goes to prove the power of the ideological force behind the discourses in action.

The binary opposition of men/women or masculinity/femininity extends beyond a simple division of people according to their bodily, gendered characteristics. As Mills (1995: 47-8) points out, the "basic sexual difference" is seen as a root of numerous other binary oppositions in our culture. That is, a number of binaries are seen as highly gendered. Such binaries include for example activity/passivity, culture/nature and intelligibility/sensitivity

(Cixous 1981b:90 in Mills 1995: 47). Each pair of the binary is considered positive when it is in accordance with the person's perceived gender, but this does not mean that the pairs are of equal value in a society. According to Mills (1995: 48), these binaries are hierarchical: one pair of the binary is valued more than the other, and the valued pair is nearly always connected to masculinity. This means that binary oppositions are not a neutral way of categorizing and representing the world. The use of these kinds of gendered, hierarchical binary oppositions creates representations of reality where women are different from, and worth less than, men.

2.3. The Social function of fairy tales

According to Bottigheimer (1989: xi), fairy tales have at least three distinct functions in a society: they function as illusion, as allusion and as paradigm. Bottigheimer (ibid.) suggests that fairy tales create illusions of a world that functions quite differently from our everyday lives, and that Disney's representation of women fits well under the category of such an illusion. In their illusionary capacity, fairy tales tell us that a true love's kiss has the power to bring the princess back to life, for example. In Enchanted, both Andalasia and Manhattan are situated in this kind of an illusionary world.

Fairy tales also function as a source of shared knowledge within a society and can be used allusively for numerous purposes (Bottigheimer 1989: xi-xii). Enchanted uses allusions to previous Disney fairy tales in terms of characters and plot development. Because of the allusive elements of the story, the viewers are expected to know what it means when a fallen slipper fits a maiden's foot or what the evil stepmother wants. As paradigms, fairy tales help us understand the rules of our communities and they tell us how we should behave as individuals within those communities (Bottigheimer 1989: xii). In fairy tales, certain traits, for example cunning or beauty, lead the hero or the heroine to success while other traits (often the ones possessed by the villain of the story) are condemned and punished. By rewarding some traits and punishing others, fairy tales represent some ways of being and behaving as more preferable than others. All fairy tales therefore have their lessons to teach us, whether the lessons are explicitly stated or not. According to Lieberman (1987, quoted in Bell 1995: 111-2) Disney's fairy tales represent beauty, dependence and passivity of the heroine as traits that often function as "catalysts and rewards for destined marriage and money". In other words,

fairy tales promote beauty, passivity and dependence as preferred traits of a woman, since they affect the plot and are rewarded.

2.3.1. Disney's fairy tales

Walt Disney's effect on the distribution of fairy tales in the modern world is undeniably enormous. Disney's adaptations have replaced previous versions of fairy tales in many cases and helped transform them from literally and orally transmitted texts into the modern media. Disney's access to vast audiences guarantees that the representations brought forth by the Disney company are seen and heard worldwide. Bell, Haas and Sells (1995:6) state that the vastness of Disney's "political and economic reach" often goes unnoticed due to its apparent innocence. Disney's fairy tales are viewed as a safe, apolitical and simply entertaining, which makes them almost impervious to critique (Bell et al. 1995: 4). Nevertheless, Disney is far from innocent or apolitical. For example, Zipes (1995: 39) claims Disney's fairy tales stabilize and reinforce the outmoded views and values of society. The apparent innocence of Disney and its products, connected to its widespread audiences, necessitates a critical examination of Disney films and the values they promote.

As is to be expected, Disney's versions of traditional fairy tales have had their share of criticism. For example, Disney has been criticized for its representation of women already for decades. In an early essay Stone (1975) criticises Disney for promoting the passivity of fairy tale heroines and representing women in a good-bad dichotomy. Stone (1975: 44) accuses Disney of reinforcing "the already popular stereotype of the innocent beauty victimized by the wicked villainess". Also Zipes (1995: 37) recognizes the antithesis between the active villainesses and the helpless heroines of Disney.

It has been claimed that the Disney heroines have developed since the Walt Disney era. For example Do Rozario (2004: 57) argues that the "new" Disney princesses such as Ariel, Jasmine and Pocahontas differ from earlier princesses as they decline household chores and obligations and even function as the force that disrupts the status quo of the patriarchal kingdom they live in. In contrast, Kelley (1994) claims that the changes in Disney heroine are superficial. Kelley compares Disney's Cinderella and Pretty Woman (produced by Disney's Touchstone Pictures, thus making Vivian one of Disney's heroines) and discovers numerous

similarities in the two stories. Kelley concludes that no real development in gender representations has occurred.

2.3.2. Feminist criticisms of fairy tales

Although fairy tales might not be a feminist field of research per se, they have been a subject of much interest in feminist writing. In the past decades, feminist approaches to fairy tales have varied from criticising damaging role-models and writing feminist versions of fairy tales to emphasizing the "subtle strengths" of traditional fairy tale heroines and highlighting the strong female characters of old myths and lesser known fairy tales (Stone 1989: 229-230). Representations of women and the effect of those representations have been among the most common feminist criticisms of fairy tales (see e.g. Stone 1989, Kelley 1994).

The beauty of fairy tale princesses is almost self-evident, especially when it comes to Disney. The feminine beauty ideal of fairy tales is not, however, unproblematic. Baker-Sperry and Grauerholz (2003) argue that fairy tales function as a paradigm that emphasises the importance of feminine beauty and connects it to numerous other positive features such as goodness and industriousness. According to Baker-Sperry and Grauerholz (2003: 711), the idea that "physical attractiveness is one of women's most important assets" is an oppressive form of normative social control of women. Instead of explicit limitations such as laws, individuals' behaviour can be controlled implicitly with social norms that are distributed through, for example, fairy tales. In its simplest form, the internalized values of feminine beauty ideal may lead women to shy away from activities that may threaten their attractiveness in any way (Baker-Sperry and Grauerholz 2003: 723). In addition, if women are showered with stories where being beautiful leads to success in life, whether it be finding true love or simply receiving help from a stranger, they are bound to believe that the easiest way to social power and personal satisfaction is through making oneself attractive.

Perhaps the most criticised feature of fairy tale heroines is their passivity. Only few heroines of traditional fairy tales manage to escape the role of passively waiting for a prince to come and save them. In Disney's versions this passivity is even further emphasized. Stone (1975) compares Disney's fairy tale heroines to those in Grimm's versions and in oral folk tales. She concludes that Disney's versions present heroines as even more passive than others (Stone 1975: 44). Stone (ibid.) points out that in Disney's fairy tales, the stereotypically passive

heroine is often antagonized by an equally stereotypical, active and evil villainess. The actions of the heroine do not necessarily account for either her success or peril, but her appearance and other innate features are what count. As Stone (1975: 45) writes, the success of the heroine is dependent on her kind nature and correct physical appearance: she succeeds by being, not by acting.

Quite often the princesses are not only passively waiting to be saved by the prince of their dreams, they are also constantly dependent on the help of others. Zipes (1995: 37) encapsulates the stereotype of beautiful, passive and helpless Disney princesses when describing them as "helpless ornaments in need of protection". Kelley (1994: 90) claims that features such as beauty, passivity, dependence and helplessness are all considered to be traditionally feminine. Thus a feminine heroine can be expected to possess the aforementioned features. In Disney's versions, heroines are helped by animals, godmothers, dwarves, princes and so on, and Enchanted is no exception.

Most of the aforementioned criticisms only apply to the heroine of fairy tales. The villainess on the other hand, is usually represented as the opposite of the heroine in many respects. Zipes (1995: 37) argues that the active villainesses are in fact often seen as more interesting than the helpless and passive princesses. In terms of beauty, the villainess is not very different from the heroine. Instead, as Zipes (ibid.) points out, the eroticism of Disney's witches is often a part of their appeal. Murphy (1995: 128) describes the archetypical Disney villainess as an independent and a strong woman.

3. THE PRESENT STUDY

In this chapter I will state my research questions, present my data and discuss the methods I used in conducting my research. I will first state and discuss the questions I will try to answer in my analysis. Then I will move on to present my data. I will address the reasons for choosing Enchanted as my target of analysis and give a short description of the plot. Finally, I will explain the methods of conducting the research.

3.1. Research questions

The aim of this study is to analyse the representation of women in the Disney feature film

Enchanted. Because of the limited size of this study, I will concentrate on analysing some of the most commonly recognised and criticised features of women's representation in fairy tales. The features I have decided to analyse are beauty, passivity and dependence. These features are also commonly seen as the feminine pairs of certain gendered binaries. In my analysis, I will pay attention especially to the protagonist, Giselle, and antagonist, Narissa. I will also include Nancy, Robert's girlfriend, in my analysis. Using the theoretical framework of CDA, I will try to answer the following questions:

- Are women represented as beautiful, passive or dependent in Enchanted? By answering this question I hope to find out, whether Enchanted reproduces or reinforces some of the core features of the much criticised stereotypical representations of women in fairy tales.

- To what extent are the aforementioned stereotypical representations challenged? Fairclough (1997: 136) states, that when looking at representations, it is important to look at what is excluded from the representation, not only what is included in it. By trying to locate challenges to beauty, passivity and dependency, I hope to be able to map out some of the choices made in the representation of women. If challenges of the stereotypical representations are found, it might possibly mean that Disney's representation of women is changing.

- What kinds of effects do these features (or their opposites or the lack of both) have in the story? By looking at the narrative importance of beauty, passivity and dependence I hope to find out whether said features are seen as the kinds of traits that are rewarded or punished. If the features are narratively important, that is, affect the outcome of the story, it is quite likely that they are a part of the social paradigm of desirable or undesirable femininity promoted by the fairy tale.

3.2. Data

In this study, I will analyse Disney's feature film Enchanted, which was published in 2007. The film was chosen mainly because of its similarities with Disney's earlier princess fairy tales and because of its recent release date. The numerous allusions to previous Disney fairy tales make Enchanted an interesting piece to look at in terms of representation. The recent release date is important for this study in two ways. First, according to my knowledge there are no studies published about Enchanted so far. Second, since I will examine the representation of women, it is good to have a contemporary film to look at. In doing Critical

Discourse Analysis, one must always pay attention to the social and historical context in which texts are produced. The roles expected from and available for women have changed much since the publication of the first Disney animations. As a contemporary, American film, Enchanted can reasonably be expected to resonate the values of a modern, western society.

Enchanted begins almost like any typical fairy tale; there is the evil stepmother (of the prince), Narissa; Edward, the prince longing to find a princess; and Giselle, the peasant girl who dreams of a prince. Edward saves Giselle from trouble, they fall in love at first sight and decide to marry. When Narissa hears about this, however, she disguises herself as an old hag and tricks the princess-to-be in order to prevent the marriage. Narissa then pushes Giselle into a magic well, which sends her to Manhattan, New York. When Edward hears that Giselle is in trouble again, he and Giselle's chipmunk friend Pip rush to save her. In order to prevent Edward from bringing Giselle back to Andalasia, Narissa sends her lackey Nathaniel to kill Giselle.

In New York, the lost and confused Giselle wanders around the streets trying to find her way back to her wedding in Andalasia. This is when Robert, a cynical divorce attorney, finds and saves Giselle, who is in trouble once again. Robert and his daughter, Morgan, give Giselle shelter for the night. Just like Snow White, Giselle cleans and cooks in exchange for the shelter. Robert tries to help Giselle find her way back to Andalasia and the two end up falling in love. However, they deny their feelings because Robert has a girlfriend, Nancy, and Giselle is to marry Edward.

Things escalate when Edward finally finds Giselle. Narissa decides to come to New York and finish the job she sent Nathaniel to do. Reunited with Edward, Giselle realizes that living in a fairy tale with him might not be what she wants from life after all. Giselle talks Edward into going to the Kings' and Queens' ball, where they meet Robert and Nancy. Narissa comes to the ball disguised as an old hag once again and offers Giselle a poisoned apple. Giselle takes a bite from the apple, hoping to forget her love for Robert, and falls unconscious. The only antidote to the poison apple is true love's kiss, which turns out to be a kiss from Robert, not from Edward. When Giselle is awakened, Narissa turns herself into a dragon and takes Robert to the roof of a skyscraper. Giselle follows Narissa, dropping a shoe in a Cinderella-like manner. Finally Narissa falls to her death and Giselle saves Robert. Meanwhile, Edward finds Nancy sitting sad on the floor of the ballroom. Edward tries Giselle's shoe on Nancy and it

fits. The two run to Andalasia and get married. Giselle stays with Robert and Morgan in New York and everyone lives happily ever after.

3.3. Methods

Because my research questions deal with representation from the point of view of CDA, I believe that qualitative methods can best answer my questions. My method of analysis is founded mainly on two sources. First, I used Pietikäinen and Mäntynen's (2009:110) suggestion to examine the plot when analysing a story. In my analysis, I tried to look at how the features I concentrate on effect the plot of the story. Second, some of the questions asked by Baker-Sperry and Grauerholz (2003: 716) guided my decisions when forming my own questions. For example, Baker-Sperry and Grauerholz (ibid.) asked whether there was a connection between beauty and other positive traits such as goodness. They also decided to pay attention not only to beauty per se, but to appearance in general, which included all kinds physical traits and clothing (Baker-Sperry and Grauerholz 2003: 716).

My process of analysis included a number of stages. First, I watched the film through a few times in order to familiarize myself with it. For easier reference, I made a transcript of the film. This was done by downloading subtitles from http://www.subsearch.org, removing the timestamps from the subtitles, rearranging the text mass into coherent pieces, adding the speakers and checking the result by watching the film and simultaneously comparing the transcript. After deciding which features to concentrate on in this study, I then watched the film more carefully through, pausing between scenes to write down notes. I also read through the transcript I had made in order to concentrate on the textual level only, and watched the film without sounds in order to concentrate on the visual level only. This way I was able to experience the different levels of meaning making as separate as possible. I also found this to be a good way to obtain some distance from my data and discover details that would otherwise have been lost.

In my analysis, I will look specifically at the representation of Giselle, Nancy and Narissa. Giselle and Narissa are classic Disney women: an innocent heroine and a wicked villainess (see Stone 1975: 44). Based on previous findings, I am assuming that I will find differences between the representation of the heroine and the villainess, but am unaware what I will find in regards to Nancy, who is on one hand an obstacle to the heroine's happiness, but on the

other hand a "good" character who gets a happy ending. This unawareness of what I will find is one of the reasons why I decided to include Nancy in my analysis even though she is a side character in the story. Another reason is that she also represents the women of the "real world" in Enchanted. When I refer to "all women" in my analysis, I mean only these three women, not the side characters, who I had to exclude from my analysis due to the limited length of the study.

I will approach my data with the assumption that it constructs at least two kinds of womanhood: positive and negative. The positive, desirable womanhood is constructed through the representation of the good women, especially Giselle, the protagonist of the story, and also Nancy, who also ends up living happily ever after. The villainess of the story, Narissa, represents the negative, undesirable womanhood, which is punished by death in the course of the story. Thus Enchanted offers a paradigm of a desirable or positive womanhood, which is rewarded and a paradigm of an undesirable womanhood, which is punished. In my analysis, 'good women' refers to Giselle and Nancy, who I see as the examples of preferred womanhood. I will use the term 'bad woman' to refer to Narissa, who represents unpreferred womanhood. The terms 'good' and 'bad' are thus not value judgements on the characters but refer to the social scripts of preferred and unpreferred womanhood.

In order to answer my research questions, I asked the following questions from my data: In what situations is the beauty, passivity or dependence of women significant in terms of the plot? Is beauty, passivity or dependence seen as either self-evident or important in some way? Is beauty, passivity or dependence challenged in any way? If so, what are the effects of the challenge? I paid attention to any signs of beauty, passivity and dependence, concentrating on the narrative level of the story but not excluding visual and textual levels. I also looked for signs of intelligence (and unattractiveness), activity and independence, which I consider to be the gendered binary opposites of beauty, passivity and dependence. Helplessness was seen as an equivalent of dependence: a person who needs help is usually a person who is dependent on others.

4. RESULTS

In this chapter I will present and discuss my findings. I will also relate them to earlier findings and studies written on the subject. My analysis will focus on three commonly criticised

features in the representation of women in fairy tales. These three features are beauty, passivity and dependence and they will all be discussed separately. I will first look at how relevant the feature in question is for the narrative of the story. This means that I will concentrate on looking how the feature affects the plot of the story. Then I will discuss whether the feature in question is seen as important or even self-evident by the characters of the story. As Fairclough (1997:25) points out, ideologies tend to naturalize their effects and thus make their products seem self-evident. For this reason I tried to pay special attention to the situations where beauty, passivity or dependence were consistently unquestioned. After that, I will look at the ways in which the feature in question is challenged in the story and what are the consequences of the challenge. Finally, I will relate my main findings to previous research.

4.1. Beauty: Relevance to the story

Women's beauty is a significant factor in the narrative of Enchanted and affects the fates of all the characters. More specifically, all the women in Enchanted benefit from their appearance in some way. When Robert first takes Giselle in his house to warm up, he believes she is a 'seriously confused woman' and decides to send her on her way. However, Robert has a change of heart and lets Giselle sleep on his cough. What causes Robert to change his mind is a long glance at the peacefully sleeping princess-to-be while he is already calling for a taxi. Hence Giselle is able to gain Robert's trust and affection with only her looks and without uttering a word. Nancy, then, also benefits from her physical appearance. At the end of the film, Edward asks Nancy to try on a fallen shoe. Because the shoe is 'a perfect fit', Edward marries Nancy. The correct size of the foot (and the shared understanding of the importance of such a fact) is apparently the only feature Nancy needs in order to be eligible to marry a prince. Nancy's beauty might also be a factor in prince Edward's decision to marry her, as it is complemented by Edward right before trying on the shoe. In the beginning of the film, Edward complements Giselle's beauty right after deciding to marry her. The two incidents of proposal right next to a declaration of the bride's beauty suggest a clear connection between the two.

Unlike Giselle and Nancy, Narissa uses her beauty knowingly to her benefit. Nathaniel, the servant, is in love with Narissa. Nathaniel does not explicitly state what he loves about Narissa. He does, however, fondle her picture, suggesting that it is her looks that attract him.

Towards the end of the film, it becomes clear that Nathaniel does not share Narissa's values or even know her too well, but is simply infatuated by her. This also suggests that it is Narissa's looks that attract Nathaniel to help her. Narissa gives Nathaniel hints of a possible shared future if he does what she asks him to, and the infatuated Nathaniel complies due to Narissa's beauty.

4.1.1. The importance of beauty

Giselle, Narissa and Nancy can all be described as beautiful. They all have long hair, big eyes, great skin, narrow waist and so on. Narissa is older than Giselle and Nancy, just as one would expect a stepmother in a Disney story to be. The beauty of female characters is no news, when it comes to Disney or to the film industry more generally. Although all the women are beautiful, only Giselle and Nancy are complemented on their beauty by men. In fact, most of the complements given to the good women are about their looks, with only a couple of mentions about their merits other than beauty. The bad woman, Narissa, is most often described as 'evil' and 'selfish' and her beauty is left unmentioned. This could be partly due to the fact that Narissa is older, which could mean that she is less attractive in the eyes of others. However, because Narissa does have an admirer, Nathaniel, the lack of complements on her appearance is likely to be the result of something other than unattractiveness. In their research, Baker-Sperry and Grauerholz (2003) found that written fairy tales often make a connection between beauty and other positive features, such as goodness. In Enchanted, good women are complemented on their looks, but the bad one is not. Thus, at least on the verbal level (but not on the visual or narrative levels), a connection between beauty and goodness exists.

The good women value beauty and are interested in it. All the women use evaluative sentences to describe people, objects and situations. These evaluations reveal that beauty is very important to Giselle, who frequently complements people and objects on their beauty. She also appreciates kindness and sweetness. Nancy's evaluative sentences are more about the inner qualities, but she does appreciate the beauty of the flowers she receives. Nancy's and Giselle's evaluations about the world around them show that they are positive and appreciate both inner and outer beauty. Narissa's evaluative sentences are mostly negative and not about appearance, but she does address Robert as 'handsome' when she captures him, although her tone is rather condescending.

The good women's appreciation of beauty becomes apparent through their interests and activities as well as through their evaluations of the world around them. Giselle cleans Robert's house, that is makes it beautiful, the first thing when she wakes up. The clean house is immediately noticed by Nancy. Giselle makes herself a new dress every day from Robert's curtains and is interested to hear what other people think of her clothes, while prince Edward wears the same clothes almost through the whole story. When Edward finally finds Giselle, she wants to know how she looks before rushing into his arms. When Giselle ends up going to the Kings' and Queens' ball, the biggest worry on her mind is what to wear. Also the occupational choices of the good women reflect their interest in appearance. Nancy works in the clothing industry, and when Giselle decides to stay in Manhattan, she also finds herself working in fashion.

4.1.2. Challenges to beauty

The importance of beauty was occasionally challenged in Enchanted. The feminine beauty ideal was challenged especially by Narissa, but also Robert's relationship to Nancy shows some resistance. At least through the eyes of Robert, Nancy could certainly be seen as an intelligent person. When Robert first speaks about Nancy, he refers to her reasonable nature and calls her 'nice'. He also compares her to women like Rosa Parks and Marie Curie. Robert thus seems to appreciate the intelligence and other mental features of Nancy above her looks. In the end, however, Robert falls in love with another woman who lacks most of the attributes (Giselle is emotional instead of reasonable and her knowledge of the "real" world is very limited) Robert seems to appreciate in Nancy.

Narissa actively challenges the feminine beauty ideal. She does not show much interest in her appearance and is probably the only character who does not change her clothes a single time in the course of the story, except for when she is in disguise. For Narissa, changing her appearance is just a means to an end, not a form of self expression, for example. She smiles and acts sweet to get Nathaniel to kill Giselle, but is not afraid to turn herself into an ugly old hag or a terrible dragon to get to her goal. Narissa is ready to sacrifice her beauty, at least temporarily, in order to gain power or deceive others. Narissa is also represented as an intelligent, resourceful woman: she plots to get rid of Giselle, who is in the way of her goals. She also manipulates Nathaniel to help her and gets Giselle to bite the poisoned apple.

4.1.3. Relation to previous research

In Enchanted, therefore, women are represented as beautiful and beauty is seen as a valuable characteristic for a woman. Baker-Sperry and Grauerholz (2003) claim that beauty and social power seem to have a connection in many fairy tales. They also argue that in reality, women's power through appearance is often power dependent on men and thus problematic (2003: 712). In my data, all the women benefit from their appearance socially. One gets a place to sleep, one marries a prince and one wins the affection of a willing helper because of their beauty. Beauty gives women in Enchanted a chance to get ahead in life, whether they benefit from their beauty deliberately or not. However, only the bad woman consciously uses her appearance to get what she wants. In all cases the benefits of beauty are gained from and depend on men. My findings thus support Baker-Sperry and Grauerholz's arguments.

Furthermore, Baker-Sperry and Grauerholz (2003) suggest that there seems to be a connection between beauty and goodness in fairy tales. In my data, however, the connection is not as simple as beauty equals goodness. Rather, it seems that the character's beauty is only appreciated if she is beautiful 'on the inside' as well. In addition, only the good women seem to invest their time and efforts in beauty, while the bad woman only uses her appearance as a tool to achieve her goals.

4.2. Passivity: Relevance to the story

One of the frequent criticisms of fairy tales is that they represent women as passive. This criticism only concerns the heroines of the story, whereas the villainess is often an active character. Stone (1975: 44) argues that especially Disney princesses are very passive. Do Rozario (2004: 57) on the other hand asserts, that the later Disney princesses are in fact not so passive, but pursue their dreams actively. In Enchanted, the good women seem to be mostly passive, whereas the villainess is very active. The passivity of the good women is compensated for by the activity of men.

Giselle's passivity in pursuing her dreams is pivotal for the narrative of Enchanted. Giselle's actions are not what lead her to find "the happily ever after" she dreams of. This happens rather through her passivity. Throughout the story, Giselle's fate is in the hands of other

people. She is antagonised by Narissa and protected by Edward, Robert and Pip. Her passivity in trying to find a way back to Andalasia gives her and Robert time to fall in love. Giselle's passivity is contrasted with the activeness of Narissa and compensated for by the activeness of Edward, Robert and Pip.

In Enchanted, passivity leads to finding true love. Giselle wins Robert over for good by falling into a completely passive state. In one of the last scenes of the film, it seems that Giselle will leave to Andalasia with Edward and Robert will stay together with Nancy. Then Giselle bites a poison apple given to her by disguised Narissa. Giselle becomes unconscious and can only be awaken by 'a true love's kiss'. When Edward's kisses don't wake Giselle, he asks Robert to try. "It's not possible. It couldn't be me. I've only known her for a few days." is Robert's first reply. He does not believe in true love not until his kiss wakes Giselle. Arguably, falling into absolute passivity is the only way Giselle can unequivocally prove her love to Robert.

4.2.1. The importance of passivity

The good women of Enchanted are mostly passive in pursuing their dreams and their passivity goes completely unquestioned. Although many of Giselle's views seem 'lovey-dovey' and strange to Robert due to their different cultural backgrounds, the fact that Giselle decides to passively wait for Edward is never questioned by Robert. He only questions Edward's ability or interest to find and save her and in fact offers to help Giselle himself. All the characters of the story assume that Giselle can only find her way back to Andalasia if Edward finds and saves her. Moreover, Giselle is not passive only on the level of narrative, but shows signs of passivity on the visual level of the story as well. Giselle's passivity can be seen in the way she is constantly being pushed and pulled by people. In numerous scenes, Robert simply pushes Giselle further away from something or pulls her with him somewhere. This pushing and pulling is not seen as threatening or even noticed by any of the characters. Also Narissa pulls Giselle when she guides her to a magical well and pushes her in it.

Nancy, too, is passive in pursuing her dreams. Nancy's appreciation of romance is apparent from her comments. She admires Robert for being sensitive, is excited about Robert's unusually romantic gesture of sending her flowers and complements Edward's romantic words about Giselle. Nevertheless she dates Robert, who cannot recognize her hunger for romance.

Instead of either trying to make their relationship more romantic or trying to find a romantic man, Nancy keeps on dating Robert and waits for his proposal. When Robert is asked to kiss Giselle in order to wake her up, Nancy allows it without any resistance. Afterwards, heartbroken Nancy stays in the ball instead of storming out. This is when Edward asks Nancy to try on Giselle's fallen shoe. Because it fits, Nancy and Edward run to Andalasia together and marry. Had Nancy actively shown her emotions by throwing a tantrum or storming out after losing the man she had dated for years, she would never have married prince Edward, a man able to fulfil her romantic aspirations.

The good women in Enchanted are passive in professing their romantic emotions and in making decisions about their relationships. In Enchanted, there is a number of scenes that have to do with marriage, commitment and showing romantic emotions. Prince Edward "proposes" twice. First, when Giselle falls into Edward's arms, Edward exclaims that they "shall be married in the morning" without asking Giselle's opinion, which seems to be self-evident for both of them. The second time, Edward asks to try a shoe on Nancy's foot and when it fits, no words are needed to profess that they are to marry. Robert talks about proposing, and Giselle does a musical number that begins with the words "How do you show her you love her" in order to encourage Robert to show his feelings to the woman he loves. Robert tells Giselle, that he has known Nancy for five years. To this, Giselle exclaims "And you haven't proposed? No wonder she's angry." When Narissa talks Giselle into biting the poison apple, she promises that the apple will take away the pain of "never being with the one you love, doomed to be with another". In all of the scenes described above, male activity in deciding on relationships and showing one's romantic emotions is seen as a norm or encouraged and female passivity is seen as self-evident and is not questioned. Both of the good women leave the decisions of breaking and making relationships to the men and are rewarded for it through finding their true love.

4.2.1. Challenges to passivity

All of the women in Enchanted offer some challenges to passivity. Especially Narissa is active in pursuing her dreams, although hers differ from the dreams of the good women. Narissa's activeness is important on the level of narrative and apparent on visual and textual levels of the story. Whereas Giselle is pushed and pulled around by people (and doesn't seem to mind or even notice it), nobody pushes Narissa. When she comes to Manhattan, she even stops the

cars on the streets by raising her hand and casting a spell. Narissa actively tries to retain her crown and her social power by trying to prevent her stepson from marrying. She manipulates Nathaniel to help her keep Edward from ever meeting his true love, pushes Giselle into a magical well and sends Nathaniel to make sure Giselle will not return. When Nathaniel fails in his attempts to kill Giselle, Narissa decides to do the job herself. Narissa's activeness leads to her death and is thus punished.

Although Giselle and Nancy are mostly passive, they both have their few moments of activity in the film as well. Nevertheless, the successfulness of some of their active deeds is arguable. When Giselle first comes to Manhattan, she tries to more or less actively find her way back to Andalasia, but fails in her attempt. Later, Giselle stops Edward from dispatching Robert and then asks Edward to take her on a date and to a ball before returning to Andalasia. Without this deed, Giselle could not have ended up with Robert. Getting to the same event with Robert is not enough to bring Robert and Giselle together, however. Giselle is about to leave the ball, but decides to bite the poison apple and falls unconscious. In the ball, Nancy actively cuts in Robert's and Giselle's dance and is thus active in reclaiming her date. Of course, she loses him to a sleeping Giselle only a few moments later. Only after finding her true love, Nancy manages to be active in showing her emotions; when Nancy and Edward marry, she bends him to her arm and kisses him. When Narissa captures Robert, Giselle runs after them with a sword and is able to stop Robert from falling for a moment and then catches him when he falls. All of Giselle's active deeds were done after realizing she loved Robert. This is significant in terms of the message that is being sent. Giselle is active in protecting her love but not in finding it.

4.2.3. Relation to previous research

The division of passivity and activity between the characters in my data suggests that Stone's (1975: 44) argument about Disney reinforcing the stereotype of an "innocent beauty victimized by the wicked villainess" still holds. The good women of the story are passive in making any decisions regarding their life or especially their relationships. They do not actively search for the things that make them happy, but only dream about them. The bad woman of the story is not only active in regards to her own life, but actively affects the lives and relationships of other people as well. Narissa also works actively to achieve her goals. Towards the end of the film, however, Narissa forgets her goals and acts on a personal grudge.

Capturing Robert and threatening Giselle after she no longer poses a threat to Narissa's crown can only be explained if the bad woman's desire to hurt the good one exceeds her other goals. Enchanted thus represents bad women first and foremost as harmful to good women.

Good women's passivity is represented as a natural opposition to men's activity. Passive women's lives only proceed through the actions of the men in their lives. Stone's (1975: 45) view that women succeed by being (beautiful and good-natured) instead of doing (something to succeed) is supported by my findings to a certain point. Women are allowed to be active after they find their love, but not much before that. Women's attempts at activity before finding their true love fail consistently. Do Rozario's (2004: 57) view of the new, active Disney princess does not find much support in my data. This might perhaps be due to a change in values (in this case, a return to old, patriarchal ones) or simply a by-product of the fact that Enchanted mostly alludes to the older Disney fairy tales and less to the new ones. Although Giselle and Nancy challenge the stereotypical passivity at moments, their passivity in the course of the story is still overwhelming.

4.3. Dependence: Relevance to the story

Numerous fairy tales represent the heroine as dependent on others. The villainess, on the other hand, is typically seen as an independent woman (Murphy 1995: 128). Kelley (1994: 90) asserts that helplessness and dependence are seen as traditionally feminine features. Also Stone (1975) recognizes the stereotype of a helpless, dependent princess. Although passivity and dependence are separate features, they are often intertwined. For this reason many of the scenes that were exemplary of female passivity showed also the most signs of dependence or helplessness. In Enchanted, Giselle is extremely dependent on the help of others and Narissa is an independent woman. Interestingly, Nancy however is also independent although she is considered a good woman in the story.

In terms of narrative, Giselle's dependence on other people is crucial. Giselle's passivity is not enough to create the plot of the story, but it must be connected to her need for help. Giselle requires a lot of saving. First, she falls out of a tree when escaping a troll and is saved by prince Edward. After being sent to Manhattan, Giselle is saved by Robert, who decides to help her. Although Giselle complicates Robert's life, he does not have the heart to leave her in trouble. Giselle's dependence gives men a possibility to be active and it also functions as a

significant factor in Giselle's romances.

4.3.1. The importance of dependence

Of the three women in Enchanted, Giselle is the only one who is clearly dependent on others. Giselle's dependence and helplessness are very apparent on both visual and textual levels. Giselle frequently asks help from people and animals. She clings to Robert when Nathaniel tries to kill Pip and she hides behind Robert when they are threatened by Narissa. Her dependence on others is never questioned and it eventually leads her to find her true love.

Giselle's dependence on others has clear, gendered connotations. Giselle seems to be dependent almost exclusively on men and only men offer to help her. Even Pip, the chipmunk who helps Giselle on numerous occasions, is male. The only exception to this rule is when Morgan takes Giselle shopping. However, they pay their purchases with Robert's credit card, which means that Morgan's help is in fact enabled by male resources, too. Giselle's dependence and men's willingness to help her are made relevant in connection to love at least on two occasions. First, when Giselle falls to Edward's arms after escaping a troll, it is clear for both that they will marry. After all, in fairy tales the prince does usually marry the maiden he saves. Second, Giselle realizes she is in love with Robert right after he openly doubts Edward's ability or interest in saving Giselle and expresses his own willingness to help her. For Giselle, being helped seems to be a prerequisite to love and commitment.

4.3.2. Challenges to dependence

Although Giselle's dependence is seen as self-evident, dependence is not a necessary trait for good women. As passive as Nancy might be in pursuing her goals in life, she is an independent woman, nevertheless. She works and spends time on her own (that is, without Robert). This makes her independent both economically and socially. When Narissa turns into a beast, Nancy stands behind Robert and Giselle and seems weary but does not appear to be hiding behind anyone's back. Nancy does not need help, nor does she ask for it. Despite her independence, Nancy will end up finding her true love. This suggests that independence is not a feature of only bad women. In fact, all of the women are represented as more or less economically independent.

Like many villainesses before her, Narissa is represented as an independent woman. She is royalty and is thus likely to be economically independent. Narissa is also socially independent. In most of the scenes she acts either alone or with Nathaniel, who is her servant. Although Narissa has a stepson, she does not have a husband.

Even Giselle shows some signs of independence. She takes charge of cleaning Robert's apartment, prepares breakfast and makes her own dresses. Of course, domestic capability is not a new or unusual trait for traditional Disney heroines. For example, both Cinderella and Snow White earn their keep by doing chores. At the end of the story, when Giselle decides to stay in Manhattan, she is shown in a place called "Andalasia Fashions" suggesting that Giselle has her own fashion boutique and is thus economically independent. Socially, however, Giselle shows no signs of independence. She is always accompanied by animals or other people. The few times Giselle is alone, she is lost and unhappy.

4.3.3. Relation to previous research

My findings suggest that the representation of women as dependent and helpless is still preferred, since the protagonist is very dependent on the help of men. However, dependence and helplessness are not necessary features of a good woman in Enchanted; Nancy is independent economically and socially and she does not need a man to protect her. According to Kelley (1994: 90), helplessness and dependence are seen as traditionally feminine features. This might still be the case although one of the good women was represented as independent. Nevertheless, the woman who was the most expressive of her feminine qualities (for example, her clothes were more feminine, the pitch of her voice was higher and so on) was also the one who was dependent on men. Zipes' (1995:37) view of Disney princess a helpless girl who needs to be protected was challenged by Nancy, but fully incorporated by Giselle. Murphy's (1995: 128) view of the villainess as an independent woman is supported by my findings, but as mentioned, independence is no longer a feature of only bad women. In fact, all the women in Enchanted are represented as economically independent.

5. CONCLUSION

Fairy tales, especially Disney's versions of them, have commonly been criticised for their representations of women as passive and dependent and for promoting beauty as one of the

most important assets of women. The criticism of passivity and dependence only applies to the heroines of fairy tales; the villainesses are represented as independent and active. In my research I wanted to find out if Enchanted, one of Disney's latest fairy tales, continues to represent women in a way that has been seen to promote inequality between the sexes by denying female activity and independence and by imposing the feminine beauty ideal. My findings suggest that Enchanted promotes the feminine beauty ideal by representing all the women as beautiful and benefiting from their appearance. The good women are also interested in beauty and fashion. For the bad woman, appearance is only a tool that can be used to manipulate others. The feminine beauty ideal is not significantly challenged in the representation of the good women. Passive/active binary divides the women most clearly into two categories. The good women of the story are passive in pursuing their dreams, in making decisions about their relationships and in professing their emotions. Women's passivity is highlighted against men's activity. Men are explicitly encouraged to show their positive emotions towards women, while women's emotional control and passivity is rewarded. Only after they find their true love, are they allowed to be active. The bad woman actively pursues her dreams, is in charge of her relationships and professes her (negative) emotions frequently. She is also very independent. However, independence is not necessarily an unpreferred trait. All the women in Enchanted are more or less independent economically. In addition, only the heroine is dependent on the help of others, while the other good woman is independent.

Fairy tales function as paradigms. They offer us model stories, social scripts on how the world works and how we are expected to behave. Through its good and bad female characters, Enchanted offers us a paradigm of a good, desirable womanhood and a paradigm of a bad, undesirable womanhood. Through its representation of women, Enchanted promotes passivity and beauty as important traits of desirable womanhood, while especially activity seems to be a trait of an undesirable woman. Dependence on men is preferred, as the heroine of the story is very dependent. It is not, however, an obligatory trait for a good woman.

Cultural products such as films, fairy tales and so on can be seen as technologies of gender. They offer us representations of gender and thus give us material from which we construct our own gendered ways of being. Representations do not only reflect the views of the environment in which they are produced, but also actively construct reality. Hence, representing desirable women as passive and highlighting the importance of their beauty is not only reflecting the views of our present society. It constructs a reality in which women are

rewarded for not pursuing their goals in life and for letting men decide about their relationships, for instance. It also encourages women to spend time, money and effort in being beautiful by suggesting that beauty is one of the most important assets of a woman.

In Enchanted, good women's passivity was compensated by the activity of men, and especially Giselle's dependence was contrasted with men's independence and desire to help her. The women's passivity in making decisions about relationships lead to men's activity in deciding. Men and women were thus often represented in binary opposition and as complementary to each other. Mills (1995: 48) asserts that binaries like activity/passivity are hierarchical and subordinate women. In Enchanted, the good women do not decide about the course their lives. This is not seen as problematic, since the men automatically seem to know what the women want from their lives and want the same things. This illusion, however, only applies to the world of fairy tales. In a modern, Western society, reinforcing the idea of women as naturally passive (in contrast to natural male activity) can only aim at taking away their power to be in control of their own lives.

In this study, I tried to discover whether Enchanted repeats or challenges some of the commonly criticised features of women's representation in fairy tales. My findings suggest that while in terms of beauty and passivity, no significant changes are seen, there are some challenges of dependence. Since my data is limited to a single film, it is impossible to draw any general conclusions about women's representation in Disney's fairy tales. Also, because of the limited length of this study, I was only able to look at a few features of the representation of women. Nevertheless, the representation of women certainly does not limit itself to the three features I looked at, but is far more complex. The decision to choose the analysed features based on earlier findings instead of seeing what arises from my data was a difficult one. It is possible that the features I looked at were not the most prominent ones in my data. However, I wanted to see how the representation of women in my data was situated in regards to earlier fairy tales, and this was easiest to do by looking at the features found relevant in previous studies. Further research on the subject could be made by looking at what kinds of representations of women arise from the data itself instead of searching for signs of the features selected beforehand. Also, looking at the representation of men in this particular film would make an interesting study. New Disney fairy tales are brought to the market constantly and they, too, provide new opportunities for the research of representations of gender in fairy tales.

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