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This paper describes the connection between romance novels and the fairy tale "Beauty and the Beast." Using the theories of Bruno Bettelheim, this paper investigates the meaning of the heroine and hero in "Beauty and the Beast" romance novels. The findings support previous research, which argues romances provide relief from the complexities of everyday life, and further shows how romances and fantasy help the reader in the same way Bettelheim argues fairy tales help children.

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“BEAUTY AND THE BEAST” THEMES IN ROMANCE NOVELS

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Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
The Importance of Fantasy and Romance.....	2
Who is Beast?.....	6
The Divided Self.....	12
“My Greatest Fear”.....	17
A Rejection of the Passive.....	21
How it all comes together.....	22
Conclusion.....	35
Works Cited.....	37

Introduction

According to the Romance Writers of America's 2004 report, romance novels make up about 50% of paperback sales and 40% of popular fiction sold. Despite this popularity, research into the romance novel is only a recent phenomenon. Moreover, according to the authors themselves, the romance novel has changed since the major works of research were done (Krentz). These changes include novel content, making the heroine more modern (moving her job from secretary to corner office, from nurse to doctor), and overall genre changes, such as sexier writing and the expansion of the hero's point of view. The genre has also seen an explosion of fairytale themes, including a series from author Teresa Medeiros and a "Faerie Tale Romance" series from publisher Love Story. An overly simplistic explanation for this phenomenon would be "romance novels are fairy tales for adults women," but I believe this diminishes both the importance of romance novels and of fairy tales. To begin understanding this phenomenon, I will explore how authors in the genre use a specific fairy tale theme.

Relying on the past research into romances and expanding upon the theories of Bruno Bettelheim, I will examine the role of Beauty and the Beast themes in romance novels. Bettelheim argues "Beauty and the Beast" helps children work through specific developmental problems they encounter as they age. These problems are: understanding the uglier side of self, overcoming anxieties about sex, and surmounting the desire to remain a passive actor in life. Specifically, I argue that in a culture where "female characters [...] and their sexuality has remained quite rigidly imagined as either virginal

or whorish,” the “Beauty and the Beast” theme helps readers in a similar way fairy tales help children (Gamson 158).

Bruno Bettelheim uses the theories of Freud in his work both as a scholar of fairy tales and child psychologist. Bettelheim also makes a point in his book which is worth repeating; “many errors in understanding how our minds work could be avoided if modern man would at all times remain aware that these abstract concepts are nothing but convenient handles for manipulating ideas which, without such externalization, would be too difficult to comprehend” (75*n*). The metaphors and themes I pull out of romances are merely symbols and do not diminish the fact that women get pleasure from reading romances for many reasons, all of them valid.

The Importance of Fantasy and Romance

In the spirit of full disclosure, I read and enjoy romance novels for pleasure. While Radway and Modleski rejected the views of people such as Ann Snitow that romances merely serve to create desires within women that can not be fulfilled and encourage the status quo of a 1950s marriage, their arguments have not yet filtered down to most of the general public. It is still difficult for many romance readers to sit on a bus or plane with their favorite genre, or to ask a librarian for recommendations of a new romance author for fear of being judged as “unintelligent, uneducated, unsophisticated, or neurotic” (Krentz 1). One of Radway’s subjects expresses this in her “vociferous defense of her customers’ right to please themselves in any way that does not harm others,” believing “that women are too often the subject of others’ criticisms and the butt of unjustified ridicule” (54).

Despite romance's popularity, financial and market success, and the massive changes to the genre since the mid-1980s, romance (and its readers) is still burdened by the stereotype of the "bodice-ripper" and a belief that every novel is just a masked rape fantasy. Anecdotes cannot replace the weight of statistics, but many people have told me how terrible romances are, often people who have never read romance novel. Besides the simple ignorance of making a blanket statement about a genre you have never read, these stereotypes are insulting to all women who wish to decide what they like and why they like it. If nothing else, I hope this paper serves to open readers' eyes to the importance of all genres, not just romance, in the minds and lives of those who love them.

If I am correct about my assumptions, this paper provides insight into the inner-world of millions of American women. Romance novels, like popular culture in general, are historically understudied. While it is important to understand the inspirations of Shakespeare and James Joyce, it is also important to understand the inspirations of popular culture. For better or worse, romance novels probably have a greater effect on American women than any "classic" author save Jane Austen. Given their domination of the market, scholars should do more research into their appeal and their readers.

Moreover, I support Bettelheim's premise that a rich fantasy world is important and I hope to convince others of this. "Society does not approve of the reading of romance novels. It labels the books as trash and the readers as unintelligent, uneducated, unsophisticated, or neurotic" (Krentz 1). Calling any type of book trash assumes it has no value. Bettelheim's research suggests we cannot dismiss stories that do not speak to us. He argues children are attracted to the fairy tales most appropriate for their developmental state. What was just another story for a child becomes their favorite story

when that tale addresses the problems they are having at that time. For those who do not like romance, mystery, horror, etc, it is because the fantasy that genre creates does not speak to the problems in their life.

Bettelheim believes strongly in the importance of “enchantment” and a healthy fantasy life. Fairy tales help us “to find meaning in our lives,” which is “our greatest need and most difficult achievement” (Bettelheim 3). He concentrates on the role of fairy tales in the maturation of children, illustrating how several stories help children externalize and then work through their anger and frustration with their parents. He argues they bring order to the chaos of an unformed mind, unify the many layers of a child’s mind, and provide children with vicarious expression of extreme emotions, both good and bad.

One problem with much of the romance scholarship is the disregard shown for the role of fantasy in daily life. While Modleski does not think romance novels and romance readers can be dismissed by feminists as passive, she does believe “the energy women now use to belittle and defeat themselves can be rechannelled into efforts to grow and to explore ways of affirming and asserting the self” (58). Snitow states “Harlequins reveal and pander to this [romantized sex] impossible fantasy” (251). She even quotes the director of Harlequin’s publishing at the time who says, “the fantasy must have the same appeal that all of us discovered when we were first exposed to fairy tales as children” (Snitow 252). The implication is that non-readers of romance have moved past this need for fantasy and can read “an improving novel that includes a realistically written catalogue of woman’s griefs under capitalism and in the family” (Snitow 252).

Even Radway, traditionally considered the first academic defender of romance readers, originally dismissed the role of fantasy and the importance of escape in her book about romance novels, “unwittingly [repeating] the sexist assumption that has warranted a large portion of the commentary on the romance” (*Romance* 214). Radway saw the romance as a utopian projection that “leaves unchallenged the very system of social relations whose faults and imperfections gave rise to the romance and which the romance is trying to perfect” (*Reading* 215). For Radway, a “real change in power relations will occur only if women also come to understand that their need for romances is a function of their dependent status *as women* and of their acceptance of marriage as the only route to female fulfillment” (*Reading* 220). Romances (and fantasy) serves as a bandage to women, covering up the wound that needs exposure to heal.

Alison Light expresses her belief in the importance of fantasy in everyday lives, not just those women (of whom she is one) who read romances. She does not hide behind any fancy words, writing only “I for one think that there will still be romance after the revolution” (23). Not only is fantasy important for our everyday lives but also “we need a language as critics of ‘popular culture’ which can politicize without abandoning the categories of entertainment” (Light 23). Only when scholars recognize the value of fantasy as fantasy can we begin to fully understand its role as a part and reflection of our culture.

Until then, as Radway says in her later paper, academics are likely to “[repeat] the familiar pattern whereby the commentator distances herself as knowing analyst from those who, engrossed and entranced by fantasy, cannot know. They cannot fully understand the motivations, desires, and history of their subjects” (*Romance* 214).

Radway argues later in her paper that changing how we understand fantasy, approaching the subject more like Alison Light and less like Tania Modleski, will help us understand that “romances suggest that women are not limited to dreaming only what they have dreamed before [...], but are, in their fantasies, attempting to move even more freely back and forth between the subject positions of the desiring subject and the desired object and, even more radically, exploring the possibility of coding those positions not solely complementarily but equivalently and alternatively as potentially masculine and feminine” (*Romance* 227-8). The last clause is at the heart of my paper. Using the “Beauty and the Beast” theme, romance authors explore all sides of humanity, with Beauty able to be male and female, mind and animal. Without believing there is value in fantasy, work like I have done in this paper would not be possible.

Who is Beast?

The animal-groom theme of “Beauty and the Beast” is a common one and there is “probably no other fairy-tale theme [that] has so many variations” (Bettelheim 283). The one we are most familiar with came from France, credited to a Madame de Beaumont in its current form. Bettelheim states, “the Western tradition of the animal-groom stories begins with Apuleius’ story of Cupid and Psyche of the second century A.D., and he draws on even older sources” (291). The typical features of the animal-groom narrative outlined by Bettelheim are: first, “it remains unknown how and why the groom was changed into an animal”; second, “it is a sorceress who did this deed, but she is not punished for her evil doings”; and third, “it is the father who causes the heroine to join the Beast, she does it because of her love for or obedience to her father” (283).

In the story by de Beaumont, Beauty is the youngest of six children, three girls and three boys. Their father (the mother is never mentioned) is a merchant who loses all of his wealth. While the eldest girls cannot find husbands after their fall from wealth, Beauty still receives offers of marriage due to her physical attractiveness and kindness. It is important to the story that she turns down all these offers of marriage, which would remove her from poverty and hard labor, to stay with her father and care for him. Beauty's commitment to her father is important; it is a powerful link to her pre-oedipal, childhood self I will explore later.

When her father hears news he has merchandise, which could save the family fortunes, the eldest daughters ask for furs and jewels as gifts. Beauty asks only for a rose. There is no merchandise and the merchant starts his journey home poorer than ever. On his way home, empty-handed, he is caught in a storm and takes shelter in a castle where food and a nice bed are provided. The next morning, the merchant passes some roses and takes one for Beauty. Beast appears and threatens the merchant with his life for taking one of his beloved roses. In his fear, the merchant explains he only wanted to take one home for his daughter. Beast relents, on the condition that his daughter comes in the merchant's place within three months. The merchant agrees, meaning to return himself, but thankful for the luxury of seeing his daughter again. Sent home with a chest of gold, the merchant tells his family what has taken place.

Beauty immediately agrees to go to the Beast; "I assure you father," said Beauty, "I will not let you return to the palace without me. Do not try to prevent me following you. Although I am young I am not so much in love with life, and I would rather be devoured by the beast myself than endure the loss of my father" (Hearne 7). Again,

Beauty's love and affection for her father motivate her actions. Beauty goes to Beast and lives in great comfort, still like a child with her every need provided for. Though Beast is ugly and, of his own admission, no great wit, Beauty comes to enjoy his company. As they continue to live together, Beauty begins to feel more and more affection for Beast, due his good heart and kindness to her. Every night Beast asks Beauty to marry him and every night she tells him no.

Again, Beauty's love and commitment to her father moves the story forward. She desires to see her father one last time. Beast agrees under the condition that Beauty returns in eight days. While her father is overjoyed to see her, her two jealous sisters (who are unhappily married) conspire to keep her home for eight days longer, hoping Beast will be angry with her and devour her. Beauty falls for their trick, but misses Beast. She realizes her sisters fooled her and follows Beast's directions to return home. When she returns, she finds Beast near death from sorrow. Beauty tells Beast she will marry him, fireworks go off, and Beast is transformed into a handsome prince. A sorceress had cursed him to be ugly and no great wit until he could find a beautiful woman who would love him for his kindness alone. Beauty's sisters are punished for their pride and selfishness. Beauty and the Beast live happily ever after.

Besides the requisite happy ending, this fairy tale is appropriate for a romance novel for a couple of reasons. The first is it is a heroine's story. Like Cinderella, "Beauty and the Beast" is a story told entirely from the heroine's point of view. This is an important aspect of romance novels; no matter how much of the story the author writes from the hero's point of view, a romance novel is a story about the heroine.

Secondly, “Beauty and the Beast” is a story of courtship and love. Bettelheim makes this distinction in his work. In Cinderella and other fairy tales where the hero and heroine interact little before marriage, “nothing more specific can be learned from their behavior about what developments are involved in loving somebody, what the nature of the commitment ‘being in love’ entails” (278). For Bettelheim, Cinderella and Snow White “take the heroine up to the threshold of true love, [they] do not tell what personal growth is required for union with the beloved other” (278). In order to be a story about love, the heroine and hero must learn how, “in addition to being oneself, one is at the same time able and happy to be oneself with another” (Bettelheim 279).

Learning about the power of love is the magic of the animal-groom narrative. Radway's work reflects the importance of this ability to be “able and happy to be oneself with another.” Janice Radway studied romance readers from a medium-sized city she called Smithton. The Smithton women place “constant emphasis on the importance of mutuality in love” (Radway 81). Put another way, “the direction of growth is *not* towards greater degrees of autonomy or individuation or the breaking of early emotional ties. Rather, development is a dynamic process of growth within the relationship” (Juhasz 242). The animal-groom narrative and the mutual transformation that must occur for the fairy tale to end happily fits nicely into what Radway’s subjects consider important in a romance novel.

There are some complications with translating “Beauty and the Beast” into a romance novel, the biggest being Beast. While in some respects almost every romance tells the same story, “that an ideal love is possible *even in the worst of circumstances* and that a woman can be nurtured and cared for even by a man who appears gruff and

indifferent (Radway 71), the hero in a “Beauty and the Beast” themed novel must be more than just gruff. Something about the hero must make him unfit for or feared in regular society. In fairy tales or a paranormal romance, magic can turn the hero into a beast. In a more realistic novel, something else must make the beast. Generally the author does this through some form of social curse that makes the hero unwelcome in the society.

The novels I examine for this paper use a couple different methods to create the social curse. One is for a mysterious death to surround the hero’s previous wife/fiancée. This is the device used in *Ravished* by Amanda Quick, *Only in Your Arms (Only)* by Lisa Kleypas, and *The Bride Sale (Sale)* by Candace Hern. In *A Rose in Winter (Rose)* by Kathleen Woodiwiss and *The Bride and the Beast (Bride)* by Teresa Medeiros, the hero is hiding himself under cover of a beast (a burned cripple for Woodiwiss and the trick of a dragon haunted castle in Medeiros to right a wrong done to his family by the townspeople. A curse on the family is the device used in *To Marry the Duke (Marry)* by Julianne MacLean and *Lair of the Lion (Lion)* by Christine Freehan. *Lion* is a paranormal romance and the only one where the hero is actually a beast. The last device is that of a crippling injury that turns the hero into a beast, as Laura Kinsale has done with *Flowers from the Storm (Flowers)*, Judith Ivory has done with *Beast*, Amy J. Fetzer has done in *Taming the Beast (Taming)* and Nicole Byrd has done with *Beauty in Black (Beauty)*.

While most of these devices do not actually make the hero into a physical beast (*Lion* is the exception), the hero either pretends to be a beastly character (*Bride* and *Rose*) or is considered by himself and others to be unacceptable for marriage (*Ravished*, *Only*, *Taming*, *Sale*, *Beauty*, *Flowers* and *Marry*). The result is that only a heroine of extreme

goodness, kindness, and usually stubbornness would marry a man so rejected by society. She must be willing to look beyond the rumor of murder (*Ravished, Sale and Only*), past the physical (*Lion, Rose, Taming, Beast, Beauty and Flowers*), or rumors of an insanity curse (*Marry*). The hero is a beast.

Only *Lion* has a sorceress to blame for the hero's curse and, unlike the fairy tale, the sorceress is punished for her misdeed. However, many of authors create the beast around a woman. In *Ravished, Sale, and Only*, society suspects the hero of killing a woman. In *Ravished* and *Only*, this woman was unfaithful and killed by someone for her misdeeds (in *Ravished* it was her father, in *Only* her lover). Kinsale suggests a woman is responsible for the hero's madness by making the malady (it seems as if the hero of *Flowers* has a stroke) take place as the hero is leaving his lover's bed and runs into her husband. The hero in *Taming* retreats from society because the scars he got after an accident repulsed his ex-wife. This creates a situation like the fairy tale, where a woman creates the beast in the hero.

A common crossover from the fairy tale into the romance novel is the role of the father. The father is often responsible for the heroine attaching herself to the hero. In *Only* and *Rose*, the heroine has a disappointing father figure. Her desire to get away from her father pushes the heroine into either running away (*Only*) or accepting an offer of marriage from a man she cannot see (*Rose*). In *Bride*, the father betrayed the hero and sets up the novel, while in *Flowers* a letter thought to be from her father eases the heroine's mind about her actions. The father in *Beast* arranges the marriage between the hero and heroine. The heroine in *Lion* risks facing a beast to save her brother, who serves as the father-figure, and the heroine in *Marry* is in England to marry a member of the

British nobility under her parents' wishes. In *Taming*, *Beauty*, and *Sale*, the fathers are negligible. However, the heroine in *Beauty* and *Taming* are older, so the father would naturally play less of a role, while the heroine in *Sale* had her first marriage arranged by her father.

The Divided Self

One key theme in romance novel scholarship is the divided self of modern women and the role romance plays is bridging the divide, if only for a short period of time. In Tania Modleski's *Loving with a Vengeance: Mass Produced Fantasies for Women*, this divided self is described as the constant awareness women are raised with that they are being watched at all times. As a woman is watched, she must be aware how she appears to the watchers. Watching herself being watched splits the heroine in half. Modleski argues "romances help readers, if only temporarily, to believe in the possibility of transcending the divided self" (37). Juhasz echoes the role of watching and being watched in women's lives and fiction. She argues the importance of being watched starts with infants and their mothers, "when I look I am seen, so I exist" (243). This pushes the idea of being watched further, women are raised to believe they only exist when someone sees them.

Beauty begins the story with a divided self. In the fairy tale, Beauty has no personality, outside of how others see her. She is the perfect daughter, beautiful, kind, devoted, etc., as if she is acting to only please those around her and never to please herself. She has not yet accepted her uglier qualities, as represented by the Beast.

The heroine in *Bride* begins the novel by watching the hero, though the he turns the tables on her later when "she was not alone. He did not stir or betray himself with so

much as a whisper of a breath, yet his presence was as undeniable as the ever-present murmur of the sea against the rocks” (Medeiros 92-3). In *Lion*, the hero watches the heroine from the beginning as she travels to his home with “the sensation that something was pacing along beside them, just out of sight” (Freehan 1). Even the castle “[stares] back with cold eyes” (Freehan 4). It is not only the heroes who watch the heroines, but the entirety of their society. Sophia, the heroine of *Marry*, has her every step watched as the rich American heiress, “like a fish herself—very much out of familiar waters” (MacLean 3).

The hero of *Taming* hires Laura to be a nanny for his four-year old child. Throughout most of the novel, the hero watches her as he lurks around his mansion, hiding in servants' stairways and secret passageways. “Suddenly, the feeling of being watched washed over her” (106). Richard, the hero, is afraid his scars will repulse her. He never lets Laura see him clearly. Laura understands his actions as “a man who held so much in his appearance” and it scares her (136). She is afraid Richard only wants her because she is pretty and never wanted because of her intelligence or personality. The watching defines Laura’s division; how could a man be interested in her whole self if he is so conscious of the physical that he will not let her see him. Laura believes Richard must only want a piece of her (her beauty), because he only gives her a piece of him (his personality).

Radway describes this divided self differently, “for Dot and her customers, romances provide a utopian vision in which female individuality and sense of self are shown to be compatible with nurturance and care by another” (55). Radway believes the Smithton readers were raised to expect and desire love from a man in a certain way, but

men are not raised to show love in the same way. This difference is not compatible and relationship force women to accept affection they do not understand. As such, society allows women to either have a strong sense of self or to feel cared for. One either can need or be needed, but one cannot do both. Radway argues romances provide relief from this division, where women get the care they desire without losing any of their independence. While this might be a utopian vision, it is also an admirable one.

The Beauty character in many of the novels is set up as a caring woman, often taking the place of the mother. The Quaker heroine in *Flowers* cares for her blind father and then for the hero who is thought to be insane by most of his family. Even the much-abused heroine in *Rose* nurtures her family and sacrifices herself for her father's debts. After the death of her mother, the heroine in *Bride* tries unsuccessfully to rein in her wild sisters and care for her father who has gone insane. The heroine in *Taming* becomes a surrogate mother for the hero's four-year old child. As I shall discuss later, one of the key parts for the "Beauty and the Beast" theme is the rejection of childhood by transferring the love the heroine has for her father and family to the hero, often shown by the heroine transferring her care from father to lover. This is a point Bettelheim makes in his work. To mature, Beauty must transfer her love and need for love from her father to her lover. This action represents Beauty moving from childhood to adulthood.

Others describe less a "divided self" than a lack of self. Juhasz argues "the marriage ending is less cooptation, as women would have it, with success contingent upon submission of self to that patriarchal institution marriage than it is *reward* for self-realization, for a maturation that derives from relationship rather than separation"(239).

Juhasz believes that a woman's goal of self-realization must include love for "love and identity are concurrent" (239).

The need for personal identity fits in nicely with the divided/watched self. If what Juhasz states is true, that an infant learns she exists because she is watched by her mother, the later awareness of being watched impedes a woman's ability to find a personal identity. The heroine must learn how to define herself outside of her watcher before she can enter into a mature relationship. She must reconcile her watched self with her inner self.

While some scholars see romances as texts that help readers with their divided self or to find a personal identity, other critics understand the novels differently. To those critics, the romance novel "extinguishes its own heroine, confining her within a story that ignores the full range of her concerns and abilities ... and denies her independent goal-oriented action outside of love and marriage" (Regis 10). Whether positive or negative, the implication across the scholarship is clear; romances are more than just stories of love, they are stories of a woman's sense of self.

Bettelheim echoes this problem of a divided self with his analysis of "Beauty and the Beast":

"Beauty and the Beast" begins with an immature view which posits man to have a dual existence as animal and as mind—symbolized by Beauty. In the process of maturation, these artificially isolated aspects of our humanity must become unified; that alone permits us to attain complete human fulfillment (308).

"Maturation" is a key term Bettelheim uses that links back to the romance novel.

Juhasz's and Radway's works explore romances, where love does not rely on separation and a dual existence. Romance heroines mature because they unite the different pieces of

themselves and they learn how through relationship and love. Using the theme of “Beauty and the Beast,” this maturation is not only through a relationship with the Beast character, but also through a relationship with the animal character within herself, the part she does not want people to see.

In “Beauty and the Beast,” maturation is not just uniting Beauty’s divided self, but also her recognition that what was once “repugnant [becomes] beautiful” (Bettelheim 308). This will be mentioned again as I discuss the role of the animal-groom narrative and sex, but for now it is only important to say the heroine must see beauty in ugliness outside of her (the hero) and accept ugliness inside of her.

Success in a “Beauty and the Beast” novel can only happen after the heroine and hero have achieved maturation and learned to trust one another. Often, the hero and heroine must learn to trust one another before they can defeat a villain. A good example is from *Ravished*. As the hero describes while trying to discover the leader of a ring of thieves, “Harriet may be correct [...] Perhaps I should explain myself and my plans to others more often” (351). It is only after the hero learns to confide in the heroine (Harriet) can they catch the ringleader, find out the truth about the death of the hero’s fiancée, and together discover a large fossil. For the sake of completion, I should note Harriet also had to learn to trust the hero before the villain could be trapped. *Ravished* stresses the unity of self. The villain can only be subdued after the couple has overcome their divisions. Once the heroine can face the Beast with no hidden agenda and suspect none from him can she succeed in her goals.

“My greatest fear”

So says the heroine of *Beauty and the Beast*, by Hannah Howell. The heroine’s “greatest fear is that [she] shall loathe warming [her] husband’s bed,” revealing the deep anxieties women have about sex (28). Gytha sets her goals low, as she tells her friend, “Enjoyment is not necessarily what I seek. I simply do not want to be repulsed” (28). Gytha’s fear is less extreme than Modleski’s understanding of woman and sex. Modleski argues Harlequin romances reveal deep confusion and fear in women regarding sex and violence. The pseudo-rape scenes of the novels and “the desire to be taken by force (manifest content) conceals anxiety about rape and longing for power and revenge (latent content)” (48). In the novels, Modleski finds a great deal of anger over the power men have over women and domination, which often gets confused with desire.

Ann Barr Snitow does not see vengeance in romance novels. Rather, she finds the heroine, together with her daily activities, “is in a constant state of potential sexuality” (249). Moreover, Harlequin romances “are not just an escape; they offer release, [...] specifically sexual release” (Snitow 254). In the novels, Snitow finds “those ‘hard fingers’ are the penis; a glance is penetration,” essentially the whole novel is a “sexual odyssey” for women (255). Indeed, the title of Snitow’s article is “Mass Market Romance: Pornography for Women is Different.” Not only are these novels about sex, they are pornography.

Snitow does make one important leap between the themes covered in this paper. She finds a link between sexual desire, division, and passivity. In this case, “the Harlequin formula glorifies the distances between the sexes” (Snitow 250). Snitow does not read any hint of a “divided self” in the novels; rather she sees a “titillating” distance

between the sexes that created the sexual experience (250). If Bettelheim is correct, the distance between Beauty and Beast is representative of the division of the heroine's self. Moreover, the Beast represents the animal self, the sexual self, within the heroine and bridging the distance between the two selves is part of sexual excitement. Snitow may understand the distance between the hero and heroine differently, but the connection is the same—the unknown and different is sexually exciting. Passivity is also part of the sexual experience. In *Harlequins*, Snitow believes “waiting, anticipation, anxiety—these represent the high point of sexual experience” (250). I understand the connection between passivity and sexual desire differently, but the connection is there, no matter whether or not you see the connection as positive or negative.

In her paper on *Rebecca*, Alison Light sees the heroine's fight for her own sexuality and identity as a fight for a successful marriage, which “will also legitimize female sexual desire” (10). Light argues that sexual repression and problems of identity in *Rebecca* are related. The girl (for she has no name) creates an image of Rebecca as a highly sexual desirable woman whom she would like to be. The girl would like to find her sexuality (repressed by years of middle class upbringing and represented by Rebecca) so she may feel comfortable as Max's wife. Only when the girl dares to be like Rebecca will she be secure, “socially and sexually” (Light 12). Of course, Rebecca is only a figment of the girl's imagination and Rebecca's aggressive female sexuality is rejected at the end of the story. Max and the girl live in exile after female sexuality is exposed as evil. The novel ends bittersweet. The girl gains Max, but loses the paradise of Manderley. She is loved by Max, but more as a parent loves a child rather than a husband loves a wife. The girl never gets a name and never comes into any form of full

personhood. Light's paper suggests that had Max accepted the girl's stronger sexuality, Manderley may still have been destroyed but the girl would have gotten a name, and become a woman.

Bettelheim links sexual anxiety and the divided self together: "fairy tales suggest that eventually there comes a time when we must learn what we have not known before—or, to put it psychoanalytically, to undo the repression of sex" (279). The reason for an animal-groom and not an animal-bride is "it is the female who has to overcome her view of sex as loathsome and animal-like" (Bettelheim 285). Linking back to the divided self, Beauty must overcome her loathing of the Beast (as he represents her animal self and her sexual nature) before she can come into her full personhood.

In his book, Bettelheim seems to expect this undoing of sexual repression happens sometime in childhood, that "fairy tales are an ideal way for the child to learn about sex in a fashion appropriate to his age and developmental understanding" (279). I think the previous discussion on romance novels shows just how few women have actually overcome their sexual repression, especially if Modleski and Snitow are correct in their understanding of Harlequins.

The problem women have with sex is understandable given modern culture. Commercials, sitcoms, and movies all reinforce gender roles and sexual stereotypes. There is even a journal dedicated to representations of sex roles, *Sex Roles*, published by Springer Netherlands. Of concern to this paper is the virgin-whore dichotomy, "the axis of sexually 'pure' or sexual 'ruined,' of virgin or whore, of loose woman or bad girl" (Gameson 158). Women can be either virginal (childlike, not aware of their animal self) or whores (their animal self has taken over). Joshua Gameson provides an interesting

analysis of this dichotomy with accidental celebrities, like Jessica Hahn, the woman who brought down televangelist Jim Bakker. Even a brief encounter in a hotel room can change a woman from an innocent to a fallen woman. For Jessica Hahn, “independence is achieved through dependence,” which goes against the sexual independence and maturity Bettelheim writes about (Gameson 171).

Sex is a dangerous activity, no matter how old you are. It threatens independence, health, and reputation. It brings both participants closer to a more primal existence, from which it can be difficult leave. However, it is also rewarding and worth the risk. In “Beauty and the Beast,” Beauty must learn how to negotiate those risks, represented by the initially threatening figure of the Beast.

The heroine of *Sale*, Verity, must learn to accept she is a sexual being and not feel anger towards her “traitorous body” (180). She prays it will

not feel even a suggestion of excitement or anticipation. Her wedding night had taught her what to expect, and there was nothing exciting to anticipate in what might have happened. Only disgust and dismissal (180).

Only after the heroine has learned to trust that the hero is not a murderer and she is freed from her ties to her childhood can she overcome her sexual repression and begin a mature, sexual relationship.

Verity’s body is no longer “traitorous,” but rather “she gave herself up to the sheer sensuous pleasure” (336). After Verity has united the parts of herself and taken an active role in her future, sex is not something to fear and it does not shame her. She prevails over the virgin/whore dichotomy haunting modern women.

A Rejection of the Passive

Modleski, Snitow, and Bettelheim all emphasize the role of passivity in sexual repression and anxiety. For Modleski, passivity relates to innocence and artlessness. For a woman to be interested in men, sex, or sexual relations, she must be an adventuress and guilty of the greatest fault possible, that of wanting a wealthy, attractive husband. To be anything other than passive, “to be alive and conscious is to be suspect” (Modleski 52). For the hero to finally believe the heroine is not the wicked woman he suspects her to be, he must overhear a discussion of her innocence by lurking behind a closet door or under a bush. The more the heroine actively tries to defend herself and take part in her future, the more suspect she is. Only in passivity is a woman innocent.

Snitow understands the passivity as a shallow “expression of the female potential for sexual feeling” (255). In this way, Harlequins do not affirm female sexuality, but create excitement for the passive reception of male sexuality. Again, Snitow connects sexual repression (passivity) to the divided self, as it is understood in this paper. As mothers love their babies simply for existing (they are loved because they are seen), women want to be passive receptors of sexuality as well. The divided self so aware of being watched is also passive. It can get attention without being active, without coming into full personhood.

According to Bettelheim, a rejection of passivity and narcissism is at the heart of the “Beauty and the Beast” story. Narcissism is the counterpart of passivity, the desire to let someone else take care of you, perfectly and without your input. It is a childlike desire. Beauty’s passive existence in the castle where Beast grants her every wish is “no life at all” (Bettelheim 307). For the story to end happily, Beauty must act. She must

make a choice between staying with her father (her childhood desires) and returning to the Beast she loves. This action represents the final growth in Beauty. She can finally accept the two sides of her self and embrace sex as “part of a loving relation freely engaged in” (Bettelheim 309).

It is only after the heroine of *Bride*, Gwendolyn, takes action to further her goals that she unites with the hero. After spending most of the novel uncomfortable with herself (Gwendolyn is heavier than the rest of her family, educated where the rest of the townspeople are not, etc), she finds a hero who accepts and loves her. In this case, Bernard cannot accept that he is worthy of the Gwendolyn. He marries then leaves her. Rather than waiting for Bernard to change his mind, Gwendolyn declares “I’m the MacCullough now. And right or wrong, a MacCullough always stands to fight” (294). After spending the novel letting life happen to her, Gwendolyn makes the decision to fight for what she wants. She actively pursues her desires and wins.

Not only does she pursue her desires and succeed, Gwendolyn takes control of her sexuality as well. “’But you forget I’m not a little girl anymore.’ She flattened her palms against his chest, sending a shiver rippling through the taut muscles of his abdomen. ‘I don’t need a boy. I need man’” (306). She has accepted and taken control of her desires, rejecting what she needed as a child for what she needs as an adult woman. “Her boldness was irresistible” (307) and her husband falls for her trap.

How it all comes together

So far in this paper, I have demonstrated the set up of a “Beauty and the Beast” theme and the problems it resolves. Namely, the heroine must unite her divided self, she must overcome her repression or revulsion of sex, and she must take an active role in her

life and sexuality. In Bettelheim, these are the childhood problems “Beauty and the Beast” presents and then resolves. These are the issues a person must address before maturation, in order to find fulfillment both as a full person and in an adult relationship. It is the nice overlap of Bettelheim and academic research into romance novels that makes the “Beauty and the Beast” themes interesting.

I have provided examples from some of the novels to illustrate female passivity, anxiety over sex, and a divided self. The question then becomes: how do these problems work together in a complete novel? Do they work as Bettelheim argues they do in the fairy tale? A deeper analysis of three novels will illustrate my point and better demonstrate how these pieces work together.

Flowers from the Storm

In the beginning of Kinsale’s novel, the hero, the Duke of Jervaulx, is a brilliant mathematician and the kind of man from whom “a marriage proposal would have crippled [a] girl for life, and an offer of a baser sort killed her” (1). Kinsale writes Jervaulx as a morally destitute man, starting the novel as he had just had sex with another man’s wife. The heroine, Maddy, is a Quaker, the attentive daughter of a blind mathematician, and certain of her simplicity and piety. Maddy serves as the go between for her father and Jervaulx, disgusted by Jervaulx’s “abysmal moral character” (19).

When Maddy accepts a job at her cousin’s mental hospital, she finds Jervaulx with the violent patients, “reduced to an animal nature” (51). Maddy and her father had been told Jervaulx had died in a duel. What actually happened to Jervaulx is unclear. He was struck with a headache while leaving his lover’s home and fell into unconsciousness after a duel. When he came to, he was so violent he broke a footman’s arm and his

mother had him hospitalized. His family is about to bring him before Chancery to determine his ability to keep his duchy when Maddy finds him in the hospital. After a brief communication through math, Maddy decides “*he is not mad; he is maddened*” (65). For reasons she does not understand, Maddy believe Jervaulx to be perfectly sound, just unable to communicate in anyway other than violence. Kinsale has set up the two characters of Beauty and the cursed Beast.

Feeling she has had a religious Opening, Maddy takes control of Jervaulx’s care. This is Maddy’s first active moment in the novel and it is for Jervaulx, her Beast. It is the reader’s first hint that Maddy will find herself and her voice only by staying with Jervaulx. Through her patience, Jervaulx begins to talk and the two begin a hesitant relationship. When Jervaulx fails his first competence hearing, his aunt tells him he will not return to the hospital if he marries and produces an heir. Jervaulx's aunt finds a bride, a young woman willing to marry a man she believes to be crazy so she may be a duchess. Unable to say the words that would legally marry them, Jervaulx grabs Maddy and runs away.

Jervaulx would like to marry Maddy, but she will not have him for fear of being thrown out of the Society of Friends. After receiving a note from her father, Maddy continues running with Jervaulx, determined to save Jervaulx from the mental hospital. In these chapters, Kinsale does two things. One, she complicates Maddy’s ties to her past. Having previously hinted at Maddy’s personal vanity and her problems keeping to strict Quaker rules (the divided self), Kinsale raises the stakes for Maddy.

The other thing Kinsale does in this section is strongly link Maddy with her love and respect for her father. Without her father’s permission and blessing, Maddy would

not go with Jervaulx, even though she did not believe he should be in the hospital. She has full confidence in her father's faith. Quaker rules and her devotion to her father are Maddy's link to her childhood that, according to Bettelheim, must be transferred to her husband (future self) for her to mature into a complete person. Kinsale raises the question; will Maddy cling to her childhood beliefs or give them up and follow her future? Maddy must also learn loving Jervaulx does not mean she does not still love her father.

Bettelheim describes this similarly, Beauty must move "from believing that she must choose between her love for her father and her love for the Beast, Beauty moves to the happy discovery that seeing these two loves in opposition is an immature view of things" (308). Maddy must learn how to love Jervaulx, a non-Quaker, without losing pieces of her personality she associates with the Society of Friends and which she cherishes. For Maddy, this includes her father.

Tricked into believing police are pursuing them and violence is about to ensue, Maddy agrees to a quick marriage with Jervaulx. As his wife, Maddy will be able to prevent the police from taking Jervaulx to the hospital. Here, even though Maddy acts, she is not the instigator of the action. Maddy is still a passive character. After their marriage, Maddy and Jervaulx return to the Jervaulx home and begin the process of healing.

However, Maddy is still tied to her childhood self and it keeps her from consummating her marriage. In a conversation with Jervaulx's friends, Maddy asks if she can undo the marriage. She is told, "Don't consummate it. And when you decide you can't bear with being a duchess and his wife any longer, then come to me" (311). It

is not Jervaulx's animal nature Maddy does not want to be tied to, she is not afraid or disgusted by him, rather her desire to return to the Society of Friends makes her reject her husband. The difference between her acceptance of Jervaulx and rejection of their marriage is complicated. Maddy has accepted the Beast outside herself, but she has not yet accepted it within herself. Until Maddy accepts the Beast within herself, she will continue the battle within herself.

Jervaulx accepts her decision not to consummate their marriage, but they kiss and tease like a couple in love. Maddy desires her husband, but rejects a sexual relationship due to her ties to the Quakers. In a moment of togetherness, Maddy gives in to her desire, "it was a kiss she that she'd wanted," for her husband and they have sex (343). Even still Maddy is the passive actor in their relationship. She fears her desire for her husband, believing it to be carnal and "creaturely." Maddy merely has not said "no" when Jervaulx asks if he is going too far, she does not yet say "yes."

Jervaulx returns to London with his limited speech and abilities to claim the money taken from him during his hospital stay. Maddy refuses to go, she would like to stay with her father, who has come to Jervaulx Castle. She does not fully accept her future, even though she loves her husband.

The novel comes to the turning point for Maddy and Jervaulx and the theme follows. Jervaulx is placed in a position he is unable to get out of; he is unable to talk clearly and his existence is threatened. At this moment, Maddy arrives to drive out those who wish to hurt him. "I ought not to have left thee. [...] I won't leave thee again" (410). Maddy has taken her first careful steps towards maturity. She has chosen her adult love over her oedipal love.

Jervaulx fights for control of his property, with Maddy still wavering towards her Quaker past. As soon as there is no longer a question about Jervaulx's competence, Maddy leaves him to rejoin the Society of Friends. Coached by the Friends, Maddy writes a statement of truth to read aloud so she may be welcomed back. Jervaulx comes to that meeting and protests what she has written, "*Not you, not Maddygirl, lies lies lies!*" (522). He gives her five minutes to choose between the Friends and himself.

Maddy takes longer than five minutes (similar to Beauty taking longer than eight days), but she comes out of the meeting to return to her husband. She realizes it she is "only good enough to be [his] duchess" (526). Maddy has come to accept herself as a person of earthly wants and desires. She makes an active decision to join her husband, unites the two sides of herself, and rejects the dreams of her childhood, accepting herself as an adult.

This scene also addresses Maddy's anxiety about sex. Maddy had referred to her sexual relations with Jervaulx as fornication. When she returns to Jervaulx, he emphasizes his relationship with his lover "that it ... what's called 'fornication'" (524). Sexual relations between two adults who love one another is not fornication, but is a part of healthy adult life.

All of the problems with childhood that must be left behind in "Beauty and the Beast" according to Bettelheim are addressed by the tale of Maddy and Jervaulx. Maddy has made peace with her whole self, leaving behind childhood, and embracing her future. By uniting her animal self and her mind, Maddy has achieved maturation.

Beast

Judith Ivory clearly sets up a heroine who desperately needs to mature into adulthood. Louise Vandermeer is an eighteen-year-old American heiress with no clear sense of who she wants to be. As told in the beginning of the story, she has yet to break from her parents' control over her. They even arranged for her marriage.

Her father turned on her. "See what?" he said. "If you could ruin the best prospects since Consuelo Vanderbilt married the Duke of Marlborough?"

"I didn't ruin anything. I am about to do better, in fact."

"Because of our intervention."

Louise bit back the sarcastic reply, that she had *known* she could fall back on their "intervention," if necessary. She hadn't done anything her father wasn't capable of fixing (42).

Louise is haunted by her youth, inexperience, and by her beauty. "You would like to get away from the constant, overpowering presence of your own physical attractiveness. In truth, your beauty scares you. It's occurred to you, What if nothing else about you is as magnificent" (85). Louise feels oppressed by her beauty and those she talks with constantly comment on it. When in public, it angers her to have everyone focus on her age and attractiveness and not notice her proficiency with mathematics or languages.

More importantly for the themes of Beauty and the Beast, Louise is afraid of her own sexuality, represented by her beauty and its attraction for men. She is chased by men of all ages and while she has some control over them, she knows it is only a matter of time before she meets a man she cannot manipulate. She gets lost in her own feelings, "looking for something she couldn't name, for something that perhaps wasn't there" (43). In response, she pulls away from the people around her and in the end, feels her beauty makes her lonely, despite all the men who fawn over her. "I hate it most of the time"

(56). Even with her hate of her beauty, she remains a narcissistic child who “believed in beauty, not love” (82).

Ivory has written a heroine who needs to mature just as Bettelheim describes maturity. Louise is young and unsure of herself. She feels like she is two different people, the smart, well-spoken sweet person she desires to be and the snappy, wild, beauty who harasses her parents and remains aloof from her family and society. She is both attracted to and repulsed by men and sexuality. Her emotions and her beauty are her beasts. Again, to quote Bettelheim, Louise must learn how to be “onself,” while “one is at the same time able and happy to be oneself with another” (279).

In the novel, Louise’s youth and shallowness also first disgust the hero, Charles. He arranged his engagement to a woman he has never met, and he overhears the “silly young girl” teasing, flirting, and kissing a young lieutenant (22). He also hears the lieutenant describe his failings to Louise, “he’s blind in one eye and eerie to look at in the other. He walks with a limp. And he’s aged” (22). Thinking to play a joke on his young fiancée, Charles decides to seduce Louise in the dark, where she cannot see his deformities and reveal himself to her later. Besides getting revenge for the injury to his pride, he could also test her fidelity.

While Louise is resistant, at first, to Charles seductions, it does give her the opportunity to “talk to someone as myself, just myself” without her beauty getting in the way (76). Caught up in the seduction, conversation and sex, Louise “felt herself begin to shine in the dark. This was what she grew to love best about her pasha [Charles]—who she was in his presence” (156). It is not just the ability to talk with someone without her beauty in the way, sex also links them.

What had begun as the most thrilling experience of her life was becoming, she knew, something else. For when he entered her, their union became central to her existence in that moment.

Inside, she kept thinking. Inside me. Not just physically, but emotionally (164).

Louise has learned to like all the parts of herself, through the assistance of Charles. She has become comfortable with her many beasts, not just her beauty, but also her strong emotions.

Louise's maturation has happened in the presence of a man she cannot see and whose name she does not know. It cannot be real until she can be herself around those who can see her beauty. For the rest of the book, in her marriage to Charles who she thinks she meets two weeks before their wedding, she must learn to be herself without the crutch of her unknown lover. Until then, she has still not fully matured. In her last goodbye to her unknown lover before her marriage, she still must insist "I am not a child" and he should not treat her "as if I were ten" (182, 181).

With the coming of her marriage, Louise feels "like a skittish, selfish shrew," while her fiancé is "generous and mature" (218). As nice and understanding as her husband is to her, "she felt unsure, unsettled, and her confusion itself made her behave badly" (231). Louise is still relying on the crutch her unknown lover had become as she learned to be herself, alone and in company. To do this, Louise must learn to love her husband with his blind eye and limp.

Ivory links the two characters through more than just their marriage.

"It's my body we're discussing, I believe."

"How foolish of me. I thought we were discussing mine as well" (247).

Charles and Louise's fates are linked, because Charles is Louise's beast and her fear.

Charles, as her beast, is "attractive-repulsive" (248). As she is "desperate, she thought.

To turn the man she had ended up with into the man she loved,” she is desperate to find the self she likes again (251). Not only must she unite the two parts of her self, she must unite the two men she loves.

The first piece of her beast Louise learns to accept is Charles’s features. She learns to believe beauty is not everything. She begins to find her husband “interesting to look at” and is then surprised to find herself sexually aroused by a man who previously repulsed her (311). As she feels less repulsed by Charles’s deformities, her beast begins to feel comfortable with himself. Louise “gave Charles what he could never recall having: a close, honest knowledge of him, tempered with compassion” (327).

Louise learns to deal with her emotions. She is angry with her unknown lover and Charles becomes her confidant.

“The reason you I’m telling you is that you think it’s your looks that makes me distant. It’s not. I have become quite fond of your appearance. It’s not you.”

“It’s me. I have always felt—“ So ungraceful, this, so halting. Ineloquent, blunt. But she continued, “I have always felt estranged from other people. And now I’m in a rage, to boot. Such turmoil inside.” She pressed her lips together. “I am so angry—At myself. At him, too, I suppose. A fury.”

There was just the lap of waves for a full measure before his voice said, “You don’t seem furious. Surely you’re not so angry that you—“

“Oh, I am, I assure you.” She laughed at him, at his rancorless inability to know precisely what she meant. “I’m too well-taught to let it show. I rage quietly. I seethe.” It felt really good to speak these things finally, to tell Charles in particular “(332-3).

Louise expresses several important parts of her growing maturity in this passage. She has accepted physical unattractiveness, she is learning to accept her darker emotions, and she is rejecting her upbringing. She has seen her husband in a rage, but never allowed herself to embrace those darker emotions. Louise is moving away from her childhood, her parents, and their opinions regarding extreme emotions and towards adulthood, where she

accepts her emotions as her own, while learning to control them. Charles tells Louise he loves her strong will and she begins to wonder if her “sharp tongue,” “sharp mind,” and will are lovable by someone other than her parents (355).

One last obstacle exists between Louise and full maturity; she must learn about her husband’s original deception and forgive him for it. This final act of maturity represents Louise leaving behind passivity in her life (she let her parents arrange a marriage with a man she had never met and allowed herself to be seduced by a man she could not see) and taking an active role in her future. Louise knows her husband was also her unknown lover. She tries to force him to come clean by telling him she would like him to invite her unknown lover to dinner (the lie was arranged to that her unknown lover knew Charles). When he refuses to come clean and Louise exposes her knowledge, she begins to be the mature one. Louise takes control of the relationship and the lie. She wanted honesty, she “wanted [him] to come at her headlong,” with no more lies and deceptions (369).

After an argument with Charles, Louise learns she has become her parents. She has become an adult. Louise learns that, in her own way, she is sweet, caring person, a well-rounded person rather than the shallow, callous child she had been. In that moment, she forgives Charles “and there in her husband’s feather bed, deep inside a nest of down, Louise took some initiative” (374). Louise’s journey to adulthood is complete.

Beauty is Black

Bettelheim argues the sex of the protagonist does not matter for the reader to understand the lesson. He says girls can learn from stories with a male protagonist just as boys can learn from a female protagonist. If this is the case, the story should and the

lesson should work just as well if Beast is the character to mature. If the Beast is truly an expression of Beauty's other half, the story can also be written so the hero matures. This is the story of *Beauty in Black*, a mature heroine comfortable with her position and her future and a hero not comfortable with anything. In *Beauty in Black*, the hero is the person through whom the reader learns the lessons of maturity.

Smallpox scarred John, Marquess of Gillingham, when he was a young child. As a result, he remains "ensconced in a large, dim mansion, ill cared for by the few servant who could be induced to stay with him" (2). Besides his scars, "the misery that lingered deep inside him" keeps him from entering society (18). As the story continues, the reader learns John has not yet managed to break his childhood attachment with his parents, despite (or maybe because of) their deaths. He still seeks their approval, even though he is successful at managing his estates.

Hern represents all of this by John's relationship with his estranged brother. Until John is ready to "make peace at last" with his brother, he will be unable to fully enter into an adult relationship (33). While he is at odds with his brother, he will remain stuck in his childhood, overly attached to parents who cannot help him. He will remain a divided self, "a total imposter" (72). Sex will remain a source of anxiety and fear. John does not know "what [it would] be like to have a woman feel real passion for him? He had already given up hope of finding out" (46). Perhaps most importantly, John will remain passive and not in complete control of his life, even his own house has fallen into disrepair because of his inability to act. John's passivity embarrasses him and he wonders "how could he have been blind to the state of his home and why had he not taken better care of his inheritance" (245).

Gabriel, John's brother, becomes the sounding point for John's relationship with his mother and father, while the heroine Marianne becomes a goal for John to reach. As said by Gabriel:

I, too, have been lucky enough to find a woman who believes in my honor and decency, despite all the sins I committed earlier in my wanton days. And as a result, I have found that I must live up to her beliefs, be the man she trusts me to be (260).

John would like to defeat his demons and his fears, so that he will be worthy of Marianne.

Gabriel is an important character, not just because he is John's brother. When John apologizes to Gabriel for poor actions in his childhood, he is also accepting his whole self. Part of the division between Gabriel and John was John's scars. John felt his mother loved Gabriel more, because Gabriel was still handsome. John must be willing to accept his scars, his demons, to find love with Marianne. Moreover, John must be willing to accept beauty in his life, along with the scars. John must be willing to look at Gabriel and not feel deprived.

If Marianne is the goal pulling away from his pre-oedipal self, her niece Louisa is the pull back to his childhood. Louisa is a young, beautiful, childish debutante. John accidentally ends up engaged to her when she thanks him for saving her life and he does nothing to get out of it, even though he knows she is not the woman for him and will only cause him unhappiness. For Louisa, he is not willing to make peace with his brother or care for his home. When John realizes Marianne is in his grasp, he begins to take action in his life. He takes control of his servants, instigates peace with his brother, and makes motions to break off his engagement to Louisa. John also becomes willing to travel, risk

the stare of strangers, and fully enter into life. He is comfortable with his animal self, his anger and his scars, and his beautiful self, Marianne.

Conclusion

One criticism of Bettelheim's theories is they stop at the child (he was a child psychologist, so this omission can be forgiven). I hope the above analysis demonstrates we do not lose our need for fairy tales, just because we age. Indeed, I think it is an act of great hubris to assume that we have matured into full personhood just because we survived puberty. As Light said, "there will still be romance after the revolution"—not because women will not have equal power in relationships, but because romances, especially those with Beauty and the Beast themes, help women work through anxieties they did not leave behind in childhood.

As Bettelheim demonstrates, the anxieties are not created by our specific culture; they are endemic to our existence as humans as demonstrated by the cross-cultural nature of fairy tale themes. Perhaps this also explains the popularity of romance novels in different countries and across languages. Harlequin alone publishes in twenty-seven different languages across the globe.

I have argued "Beauty and the Beast" themed romance novels hold similar appeal and provide similar lessons to their adult readers as fairy tales provide to children. Radway and Modleski have already argued romance novels help women manage the problems of modern American culture. I extend their arguments to include the problems Bettelheim believes "Beauty and the Beast" helps children cope with. These three problems are: a divided self, anxieties about sex, and a desire to remain a passive actor.

Most of this paper relies on metaphor and analogy. While representations are important and provide insight researchers would not have otherwise, we must remember they are just representations. We should be careful not to pull one metaphor out of a novel or a genre, but rather try to understand a whole novel or the whole genre together. This paper is an attempt to look at a sub-piece of a larger genre. I am not yet confident arguing Bettelheim's theories regarding other fairy tales such as Cinderella or Snow White apply to the romance novels based on those tales. Seeing if the theories can be further extended to other fairy tales would be an interesting follow-up paper.

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