



## The Concept of Magic in Fairy Tales

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*Annation. The foundation of magic lies in a special kind of consciousness: the understanding of how all things in the world relate to one another through basic but sophisticated sense perception. The spirit is known to be manifested physically in magic. There is no such thing as magic in our reality as we might find in fairy tales. Instead, the "magic," of our reality is more in line with concept of the fantasy. And even though we are aware of its falsity, we still hold our breath. Magic is created as a result of a connection between an organism's physical spirit and the natural world's spiritual current. Even though magic transcends reason, using it requires a tremendous amount of focus and mental acuity.*

This thesis aims to investigate the types of "magic" present in literary works by analyzing the idea of magic, specifically as it appears in fairy tales. Despite the existence of tremendous data on the notion of magic, there has been no prior research on the linguistic concept of magic in fairy tales. The discourse analysis of the magic presented attempts to shed light on some areas of its concept processing.

"Magic tale" has been suggested as a term that captures the idea of the form better than "fairy tale" or even "wonder tale", it points to the pivotal role that enchantment plays, both in the action of the stories and the character of its agents.<sup>1</sup> However, enchantment has its own dynamic history, its own tides, and currents, ranging from medieval faerie to romantic possession from skeptic magic entertainment to the modern technological uncanny.

There is a common knowledge that, magic exists in the Snow White fairytale by the Brothers Grimm; in fact, magic is still fairly prevalent throughout fairytales as a whole. But there might be more magic present than first appears. Some aspects are very obvious to identify, either because they are outright referred to as magic or because they are events or actions that defy the laws of physics or reason. However, not all magical occurrences are as obvious, particularly in Snow White. Most people are aware that the apple, the mirror, and—in the Disney version—the true love's kiss were all magical objects, but Snow White herself appears to be endowed with magical qualities, either from birth or ones that appear to develop over time and enable her to intervene.

"The Island of the Nine Whirlpools" as well as "The Wise Woman" demonstrate how magic allows for queer ways of being in time that inspire and allow for significant. Women's relationships open up options outside of a patriarchal-ruled life which limits women to a life of marriage and procreation. Consequently, these fairy tales assert that the heterosexist patriarchy and the life narratives it produces can be escaped through queerness demands made of women that result in the idealized happily ever after as a wife and mother. Magic is a major factor in making it possible for existences that are not constrained by these laws. Women are given access to power through magic that they would not otherwise have in a "real" setting, and this power consistently drives female-female relationships. Thus, it gives them more agency, which extends beyond the contexts of reproduction and marriage. In *Breaking the Angelic Image*, Honig argues that the Victorian magical woman deviates from the path of the evil witch and is a figure "unique in her combination of almost godlike power with feminine grace, in a completely positive way."<sup>2</sup> Many

<sup>1</sup> Warner, Marina, 'With a touch of her wand: magic & metamorphosis', *Fairy Tale: A Very Short Introduction*, Very Short Introductions (Oxford, 2018; online edn, Oxford Academic, 25 Jan. 2018).

<sup>2</sup> <http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu>



other scholars have discussed the significance of magic and the fantastical for the subversive possibilities of the fairy tale.

According to Honig, magic is essential to this empowering portrayal of women in power, especially because it "could be readily dismissed as only magic, only nonsense, not real," and it was this potential dismissal that allowed for the portrayal of non-subservient women.<sup>3</sup> In addition to discussing how magic facilitates subversion, Jack Zipes has written about the subject as well as its function in fairy tales. Zipes asserts that magic symbolizes "the conscious and unconscious desires of the lower classes to seize power" in regard to folktales in particular.<sup>4</sup> This idea, when applied to the context of the fairy tales I examine, demonstrates how magic is inextricably linked to issues of power, especially power asserted by those who are marginalized in reality.

Due to the fact that magic provides an escape from reality and that there are no drawbacks to believing in it, magic appeals to people all over the world. Reading a tale of magic allows a reader to escape into a world where almost anything is possible and, for a brief period of time, everything is ideal. The only drawback to that is that everyone will eventually have to return to reality, where things aren't always so perfect, when the story comes to an end. Even if you're not aware of it, magic has had some sort of influence on your life; even if you don't believe in it, magic is still present.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://ir.library.oregonstate.edu>

<sup>4</sup> <http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu>