INTRODUCTION

Channeling Wonder

Fairy Tales, Television, and Intermediality

Pauline Greenhill and Jill Terry Rudy

Television has long been a familiar vehicle for presenting fairy tales because it offers a medium in some ways ideal for the genre.[1] TV channels wonder when sounds and images literally float through the air and into television sets (and other devices) in homes, schools, and workplaces. Both more mundane and more wondrous than cinema, it shares these qualities with fairy tales. Even apparently realistic forms like the nightly news employ discourses of "once upon a time" and "happily ever after," for example, describing commoner Kate Middleton's marriage to heir to the British throne Prince William as a fairy tale, a Cinderella story, and so on (e.g., Lyall 2010). While viewers and critics may attend to individual TV shows, Raymond Williams asserts this is "at some distance from . . . the central television experience: the fact of flow" (1974, 95). Williams boldly admits that many of us sit there "hour after hour goggling at the box" because the intentional flow of television creates an experience that works as "the grabbing of attention in the early moments; the reiterated promise of exciting things to come, if we stay." This is why "watching television" aptly describes the experience, more so than tuning in for just one show or event (1974, 94–95). This flow, as Williams theorizes, involves variety becoming a unity. This book invites the contributors and readers to consider what happens when fairy tale, a narrative genre that revels in variation, joins the flow of television experience. Fairy tales hook viewers with their ability to grab attention and promise exciting things to come.

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North American audiences might think first of the many Disney productions that have appeared on the small screen, including those originally produced for the cinema. But this volume's contributors demonstrate how into the twenty-first century and across the world, a wide range of fairy tales have made their way into televisual forms. These range from musicals like the Rodgers and Hammerstein *Cinderella*; to Jim Henson's anthology *The StoryTeller*; to short cartoons like the sardonic *Fractured Fairy Tales* that punctuated *Rocky and His Friends* and *The Bullwinkle Show*; to commercials like the Italian *Carosello* series; to children's shows like *Super Why!*; to made-for-TV movies like the American *Snow White: A Tale of Terror,* the French *Bluebeard,* or the British *Red Riding Trilogy*; to series like the Japanese anime *Revolutionary Girl Utena* and *Grimm Masterpiece Theatre [Grimm's Fairy Tale Classics]* and the live-action *I Want to Be Cinderella!, Train Man,* and *Rich Man, Poor Woman*. In addition, tales like "Hansel and Gretel," "Little Red Riding Hood," "Beauty and the Beast," "Snow White," and "Cinderella"—and/or their main characters, themes, and motifs—appear in long-arc serials like *Merlin, Buffy the Vampire Slayer,* and *Dollhouse* and on variety shows, dramas, situation comedies, and reality TV. The television experience means that "television must produce 'parts' that each week embody the whole while also finding, within such repetition, possibilities for novel and diverting variations" (Sconce 2004, 101). This requirement helps to explain why fairy tales remain ubiquitous on TV; they allow the needed variations but still resonate, given the narrative form's familiarity. It also explains the extensive, although not inclusive, range of this essay collection.

Given the fairy tale's potent malleability, it is no surprise that fairy tales, and fairy-tale references and allusions, mesh with television's structures, genres, and modes of presentation. As Kendra Magnus-Johnston's chapter discusses, television's sometimes fleeting and temporary aspect makes it impossible to fully document every use of fairy tales. Still, Kevin Paul Smith (based on Gérard Genette [1997]) posits eight possible ways fairy-tale intertexts can work in literature—and, we would add, on TV—authorized (explicit in the title); writerly (implicit in the title); incorporation (explicit in text); allusion (implicit in text); re-vision (giving an old tale a new spin); fabulation (creating a new tale); metafiction (discussing fairy tales); and architextual/chronotopic (in setting/environment; 2007, 10). Recently, audiences and reviewers alike have interpreted as fresh, offbeat, and risky the new televisual guises of tales that scholars have long studied as cultural texts resonating over centuries. Yet shows appearing since 2011, like *Once Upon a Time* and

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Grimm, by no means innovate in bringing live-action fairy tales to television. Even 2012's *Beauty and the Beast* series is based, not on the Aarne-Thompson-Uther (ATU) tale type 425C[2] or the Disney film but on the 1980s–1990s drama series—more reason for the studies in this book, now.

We editors admit that the debuts in fall 2011 of *two* American fairy tale–themed shows on different channels with radically diverse plots and modes prompted us to ask sociologist Erving Goffman's perennial question: "What is it that's going on here?" His situational approach explains "the answer . . . is presumed by the way the individuals then proceed to get on with the affairs at hand" (1974, 8). The shows' convergence drew us and our contributors to get on with using our folklore, literary, film, and cultural studies training to reach toward understanding the relationship between media intersections, participatory behavior, and collective intelligence (see Jenkins 2006). Jessica Tiffin explains fairy tales' prodigious flexibility and multiple purposes: "The essential nonreality of fairy tale, together with its existence as a particularly coherent 'set of signs,' allows it to be playfully manipulated . . . as both structure and fiction. At the same time, play with form—ringing the changes on fairy tale—works particularly well because the form is familiar and highly recognizable" (2009, 20–21). Her ideas apply to the many modes in which fairy tales have appeared on television. They channel the fantastic, the magical, the dark, the dreamy, the wishful, and the wonderful in content and transmission.

Oral and literary fairy tales migrate into diverse media besides television; the cinema, visual arts, opera, ballet, theater, and games offer venues for their plots, themes, images, and characters. Contemporary fairy-tale rewritings and intertexts have garnered scholarly attention too ample to detail (at least from Bacchilega 1997 to Turner and Greenhill 2012). Fairy-tale films merit recent and continuing attention. Jack Zipes's (2011) history considers major figures like Georges Méliès and Walt Disney; analyzes the contribution of animation; studies cinematic tales, tale types, and fairy-tale novels; and shows the remarkable creativity displayed in Central and Eastern Europe. Dani Cavallaro (2011) links mainly European fairy tales and Japanese anime. Pauline Greenhill and Sidney Eve Matrix's edited collection (2010b) gathers work on hybridity, commodification, and feminisms, mainly in American films. Walter Rankin (2007) considers eight blockbuster horror/suspense films and their fairy-tale connections. Some of this work considers material originally presented on television without distinction from cinema.[3]

However, cultural studies scholars have long argued for the recognition of cinema and television as media with diverging sociocultural, political, and

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economic contexts, creators, audiences, and performance circumstances (see, e.g., Kaplan 1983; Petro 1986; Williams 2003; D'Acci 2004; Bignell 2013). This book distinguishes televised from other filmed fairy tales, seeking to better understand some intertextual and intermedial threads spun and cast by channeling wonder. We suggest that traditional modes of fairy tales and their transmission are to television as modernized modes of fairy tales and their transmission are to cinema. Film has a formal and professional mode of transmission and reception, and TV a more informal and local one.

Folklorists understand fairy tales as traditional narratives of wonder and magic, transmitted not only orally but also informally, locally, and face-to-face within and across communities and social groups (see, e.g., Ben-Amos 1971; Falassi 1980). Even fairy tales with known authors, like Hans Christian Andersen, Edith (Bland) Nesbit, Oscar Wilde, or Mary Louisa (Stewart) Molesworth, were spread primarily via books read in family homes, aloud, or in solitude. More recently, Europeans and North Americans may encounter these narratives in less personalized and often professionalized contexts: written in books they study at school and college or university, told by specialist storytellers from a stage, or indeed presented through various audio-visual media. The performance of fairy tales on television versus the cinema screen parallels this distinction.

Unlike fairy-tale films, traditional and televised fairy tales alike reach their audiences in familiar circumstances—often their own homes. As Donald Haase comments, "Relying on performances that are visually and aurally experienced, the televised fairy tale might seem to be a social event reminiscent of the oral tradition" (2000b, 513). Other recent modes for transmitting fairy tales, including cinema, can be received in more impersonal surroundings. As Tiffin notes, "The distance from the cozy oral storyteller in a small circle of listeners could not be greater" (2009, 179). We wouldn't take that argument too far, especially since many across the world no longer view films on cinematic screens but instead watch them on their own televisions and/or computers. And, as Haase also affirms, "The literary affinities of the televised fairy tale . . . are . . . evident. Not only does the televised fairy tale frequently draw on stories from the print tradition, it is also a scripted presentation that has none of the spontaneity or variability associated with traditional notions of oral storytelling. Similarly, viewers are clearly not engaged in a face-to-face, two-way social relationship with the narrator, performers, or creators" (2000b, 513). Yet television's differences from other cinematic forms circle around the fulcrum of its intimacy, just as fairy tales

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invoke simultaneously the broadest human concerns and the most familiar aspects of interpersonal relationships. Thus, in *Channeling Wonder,* we focus on how television channels the wonder of fairy tales, but we also attend to the increasing role of other mediated forms such as websites in the distribution, textualization, performance, and reception of traditional and literary tales on TV. We begin with a look at television studies and its interaction with folklore scholarship; we then turn to fairy tales as television texts and how the intersections of the two have, specifically and intermedially, channeled wonder.

Channeling: Television

Saying "TV is a hybrid monster, coevally subject to textuality, power, and science—all at once, but in contingent ways," Toby Miller (2010, 146) notes that TV studies' aims and practices consider "how television functions, who controls it, how it makes meaning, and what audiences do with the result" (2002, viii). Access, technology, and economics are significant in this interdisciplinary field, which ranges broadly across "monopoly capital, cultural imperialism, conditions of production, textual meaning, gendered aesthetic hierarchies, audience interpretation, and pleasure" (2002, 2). Yet art, aesthetics, and commerce need not conflict; as Tiffin writes, "The postmodern cultural environment . . . means that . . . self-consciousness, irony, and the pleasures of recognition are highly saleable commodities" (2009, 188).[4] Indeed, the commodification endemic to the production, broadcasting, and reception of most television need not negate the underlying and overriding necessity of storytelling and the enjoyment and instruction of its aesthetic forms and themes.[5] That process may be highlighted for North American viewers in the series *Carosello* (see Bacchilega and Rieder's chapter); its connections between commercial and narrative content don't follow the models with which we're familiar.

Zipes argued that folklorists "have revealed how television and film exploit folklore to evoke images of the attainment of happiness through consumption" (1984, 334) but criticized them for avoiding the implications for political economy. The specific intersections of pleasure, commodification, and tradition in various uses of fairy tales on television make avoiding their politicized implications somewhat difficult. Such powerful intersections, as Zipes argues, demand attention. Fairy-tale narratives, characters, images, and ideas well serve television's commercial aspects; like other adaptations and remakes, they ensure an audience that is at least partially engaged at the outset, and

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even their most provisional commitment facilitates the ongoing attention that leads to the ultimate desired result—selling goods and services via commercials (see, e.g., Flitterman 1983). Most contributors to *Channeling Wonder* deal with televised fairy tales' aesthetics, but the ideology is never far behind the art.

Though less universally stigmatized as low culture, television is still understood by some "as a technological and cultural 'problem' to be solved rather than a textual body to be engaged" (Sconce 2004, 94). Yet as Jeffrey Sconce argues:

> Television . . . has discovered that the cultivation of its story worlds (diegesis) is as crucial an element in its success as is storytelling. What television lacks in spectacle and narrative constraints, it makes up for in depth and duration of character relations, diegetic expansion and audience investment. A commercial series that succeeds in the US system ends up generating hundreds of hours of programming, allowing for an often quite sophisticated and complex elaboration of character and story world. Much of the transformation in television from an emphasis on plot mechanics to series architecture . . . has developed from this mutual insight by both producers and audiences. (Ibid., 95)

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Many of the contributors offer excellent examples of series architecture's significance. *Once Upon a Time* (see Hay and Baxter's chapter) and *Grimm* (see Willsey's; the two compared in Schwabe's chapter), for example, follow upon their creators' previous successes with long-arc serials—in which individual episodes resolve, but an overall story is told through a season or longer—like *Lost* and *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Episodic telefilms in which viewers watch "a continuing group of characters perform a self-contained story" (Sconce 2004, 97) include miniseries like Nick Willing's *Tin Man* (2007; see Noone 2010; Smith 2010) and *Alice* (2009) or David Carson and Herbert Wise's *The 10th Kingdom* (2000; see De Vito and Tropea 2010). These shows fit a predetermined time period, but their episodic division means that they must hold audience attention over several days—indeed, serial presentation may actually increase interest. Miniseries can be longer than most films released to theaters without risking audience engagement, because their extended time allows for plot and character development well beyond the constraints of a shorter form.[6] As such, miniseries and long-arc serial television play with fairy tales' episodic plots and minimal character development.

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"Genre is central to TV, as evidenced by, for example, the routine practices of classification undertaken by program guides. . . . Genres are about the interplay of repetition and difference, and their organization and interpretation by producers, audiences, and critics" (Miller 2010, 82). Not just abstract classifications based on specific features like music, title cues, and particular performers, creators, and producers (see Bignell 2013, 124–45), genres seek particular audiences (and, of course, particular sponsors)—"fluid guides" (Miller 2010, 83) rather than invariant forms. Thus, as Trudier Harris notes, "Fairy tales and legends shook hands with television to form unions for which we do not yet have names" (1995, 518). Though fairy tale has consistently been implicated in the "economy of genres" on television (see Bacchilega and Rieder 2010, 32), it is not a TV genre in itself but an apt part of television experience flow.

Some well-known examples of fairy-tale TV take the anthology format. Thus *Faerie Tale Theatre* and *The StoryTeller* (see Rudy's chapter) include a series of freestanding, discrete tales, often using a frame narrative like the latter's Storyteller (John Hurt), the fictive narrator. Similarly *Super Why!,* aimed at young children, has formulaic plots and recurring characters (see Brodie and McDavid's chapter). The fairy-tale serial, in the form of situation comedies like *Bewitched,* 1964–1972, *I Dream of Jeannie,* 1965–1970, and *The Charmings,* 1987–1988 (see Haase 2000b, 515, 517 and 2008, 950) made a relatively brief appearance on American television. However, into the 1990s came the cumulative narrative with individual characters or events as plot foci but "interwoven with long-term story lines that may or may not receive attention that week or even that season" (Sconce 2004, 98). The first *Beauty and the Beast* series (1987–1990) took this form, and among shows discussed here, *Grimm, Once Upon a Time,* and *Merlin* (see Nelson and Walton's chapter) obviously exemplify it. Such programs tend to offer a "'realist' aesthetic" and "increase connotations of 'quality'" (Sconce 2004, 99).

As *Channeling Wonder* demonstrates, TV fairy tales are directed at a wide age range. Specific shows, however, seek particular age groups. *Super Why!* (discussed in Brodie and McDavid's chapter) and *Grimms' Fairy Tale Classics* (Jorgensen and Warman's chapter) are for children, and the made-for-TV movies *Snow White: A Tale of Terror* (Wright's chapter), *Bluebeard* (Barzilai's chapter), and the *Red Riding Trilogy* (Greenhill and Kohm's chapter) and shows like *Grimm* (Willsey and Schwabe's chapter), *Dollhouse* (Jorgensen and Warman's and Tresca's chapters), *I Want to Be Cinderella!* (Barber's chapter), and *CSI, Lost Girl* and *Criminal Minds* (Tresca's chapter) are mainly for

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adults. *Train Man* and *Rich Man Poor Woman* (Barber's chapter), *Once Upon a Time* (Hay and Baxter's and Schwabe's chapters), and reality TV (Lee's chapter) are primarily adult interests but don't exclude younger audiences. *Revolutionary Girl Utena* (Lezubski's chapter), *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Supernatural* (Tresca's chapter), and *Merlin* (Nelson and Walton's chapter) are aimed at adolescents but may interest some adults. Fairy-tale content can include a diverse audience, often involving them in different ways. Both the *Carosello* commercials and *Fractured Fairy Tales* discussed by Bacchilega and Rieder offer various levels of interpretation accessible to diverse spectators, as do *The Simpsons* (discussed by Tresca), *The StoryTeller* (Rudy), and the *Cinderella* musicals (Sawin).

Though TV programming's time-sensitive scheduling fictively involves all ages—at some points separately and at others simultaneously—it is at best a crude tool. The pattern of children's programming (see Hendershot 2002) in early morning and midafternoon (before and after school); women's during the day; adolescents' in late afternoon and early evening; and adult (male) later in the evening is undermined by TiVo and other DVRs as well as other means of time shifting. Further, not all women are home during the day and parents may also view children's programming (or whence Brodie and McDavid's autoethnographic chapter?). The TV audience is extensively a constructed and metaphorical entity. Where business sees consumers, government sees the public (or publics), mandating limits to sex, violence, and coarse language (Hartley 2002). The presumptive genders (see D'Acci 2002; Meehan 2002), classes (see Taub 2002), (hetero)sexualities (see Sara Jones 2002), and (white) race of viewers needs deconstruction (see Gillespie 2002; Ginsberg and Roth 2002; Valdivia 2002).

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Much television audience research has criticized presumptions of a simple identity politics. The conjecture that viewers want to see only folks like themselves, and that they directly identify with and act on the actions they see, has been replaced with the idea of "interpretive communities" fostered particularly in online intermedia (see, e.g., Miller 2010, 110–44; Bignell 2013, 256–80). Nevertheless, people of color are rare in European and North American fairy tale–themed television, particular as primary characters. Exceptions include the African American *Cinderella* Rodgers and Hammerstein musical (1997; see Sawin's chapter; Barr 2000) and the mixed-race actors who play Guinevere on *Merlin* (see Nelson and Walton's chapter) and Catherine Chandler on the new *Beauty and the Beast*. But as Lee's chapter discusses, punishments for losers on reality TV shows can implicate racist and

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colonialist ideas; the "Bad Wife" must eat Moroccan food and belly dance. Queer sexualities and transgender are even rarer; though reflecting anime's frequent use of same-sex relationships between girls and the gender transformation, *Revolutionary Girl Utena* (see Lezubski's chapter) has both.[7]

Repudiation of TV as a lowbrow medium is passé in television studies. Indeed, made-for-television movies like Breillat's *Bluebeard* (see Barzilai's chapter) often rival or surpass films destined first for theaters, and many, like *Snow White: A Tale of Terror* (see Wright's chapter) and the *Red Riding Trilogy* (see Greenhill and Kohm's chapter) have theatrical release. But condescending attitudes characterize reactions to reality TV (see, e.g., Miller 2010, 160–62). Arguably like this newer TV genre, fairy tales in all their manifestations can hit the lowest common denominator but also become very arty—sometimes both at the same time (see Bacchilega and Rieder's chapter). Fairy tales share focus on transformations with much reality TV (see, e.g., Levine 2005), but play with reality can be crucial across genres (see Schwabe's chapter). Other genres may obscure their repetitive structures more than reality television does; however, a close examination can reveal a syntagmatic sequence even more invariable than that asserted by Vladimir Propp (1968) for fairy tales.[8]

Sconce argues, "The series to spawn the most involved audience communities . . . are those that orchestrate a strong and complex sense of community while also leaving a certain diegetic fringe available for textual elaboration . . . worlds that viewers gradually feel they inhabit along with the characters" (2004, 95). Hay and Baxter's chapter on *Once Upon a Time* and Nelson and Walton's on *Merlin* clearly demonstrate shows' and fans' creative engagement in intermediality to foster such a sense of community (also Jenkins 1991, 1992, 2006; Tosenberger 2008a, 2010). Fan ethnographies, and autoethnographies like Brodie and McDavid's, Sawin's, and Bacchilega and Rieder's chapters, often overlap, not only in content—using quotidian personal experience to investigate national and global structures (see Ellis and Bochner [1994] 2000; Ellis 2004)—but also in the position of the writer exploring experience firsthand.

While folklorists have been generally less than attentive to film,[9] they rarely consider television. Hitherto, many participated in the demonization of TV, joining work spotlighting "engineering and panic" (Miller 2002, 1)—the physical mode of production and the fear that the new medium would efface and/or supplant all other culture. Tom Burns's (1969) article mainly enumerates items of traditional culture noted in a single day of TV watching.

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A JSTOR search in 2012 for "television" from all folklore journals yielded a surprising small 1,152 items. Adding "fairy tale OR folktale" cut the number down to 202, the oldest from 1954. The majority included little more than asides on the medium, and only four articles have "television" in their title. In 2003, Mikel J. Koven argued that a critical survey of folklore studies and popular film and television was necessary (176). He pointed out research on TV soap operas and *Märchen*/folktale[10] telling in (French) Newfoundland—finding "traditional narrative formations" in soaps' visual and textual structures (ibid., 178). Implicit in this argument is the error by folklorists and other students of literature (e.g., Buchan 1972; Lord 2000) who presume that structures found in oral texts are by definition (only) oral. Yet the Newfoundland research also participated in hand-wringing about "the loss of traditional performance styles . . . in keeping with the perception of the devolutionary influence of the mass media" (Koven 2003, 178).

Most folklorists have presumed that television has destroyed tradition and sometimes even reify it as folklore's archrival, as in K. M. Briggs: "Television is [folktales'] great enemy, though there have been others. The great necessity for the transmission of elaborate tales is leisure. A good many people have more leisure now than they ever had, but unfortunately it is swallowed up by television or Bingo, and the chain of tradition is in danger of being broken" (1968, 84).

This discourse echoes in the assertion of criminal intention that "television came to steal the time reserved for the folk narrator" (Virtanen 1986, 224). Dan Ben-Amos, in defining folklore as process, intones: "A song, a tale, or a riddle that is performed on television or appears in print ceases to be folklore because there is a change in its communicative context" (1971, 14). Linda Dégh and Andrew Vázsonyi's work on *Märchen* and legend in television advertising demonstrates greater nuance. Saying, "Magic is merchandise of prime necessity. Magic is in demand. People who travel by airplanes still cannot do without the magic carpet" (1979, 49), they link fairy tales' magical content with commerce: "Giants, dwarves, fairies, witches, mermaids, anthropomorphic objects, personified principles appear on the television screen to enlighten the viewer on the value of certain commodities, as often as the clowning of comedians, the horror of suspense dramas, even sports games, stop to allow room for an 'important message' from the sponsor" (ibid., 50). Though they contend, pessimistically, that television "terminated occasions for traditional storytelling," they continue that it "now helps the *Märchen* to survive on the basis of entirely new traditions" (ibid.,

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56). One might surmise that commercials (see Bacchilega and Rieder's chapter) are forerunners to the concept that fairy tales are real that is so central to *Grimm* and *Once Upon a Time* (see Schwabe's chapter) as well as to the reality TV series Lee considers.

Folklore's death is regularly announced and prematurely mourned by those who think they arrived ten or twenty years too late to get genuine, unspoiled, authentic material (discussed, e.g., in Greenhill 1989). Yet Dégh notes, "Television from the early 1940s suddenly expanded the limits of common audience awareness still further. Through a relatively limited number of popular characters and through paraphernalia, tone, and style, the Grimm tales became generally known, reaching even those who otherwise never would have encountered them" (1979, 101). The familiarity not only of tales like "Cinderella" (see Barber's and Sawin's chapters), "Little Red Riding Hood" (see Greenhill and Kohm's chapter), "Sleeping Beauty" (see Jorgensen and Warman's chapter), and "Hansel and Gretel" (see Tresca's chapter) but also of the *idea* of fairy tales may be a reason behind their popularity on TV. Like sequels, films based on popular books like the Harry Potter, Narnia, or Lord of the Rings series, and remakes (from films and increasingly also TV), traditional fairy tales' familiarity serves television and vice versa.[11] Alan Dundes defends mass media, including TV, as productive rather than destructive: "If there is any validity to what has been termed the concept of 'postliterate man' (as opposed to preliterate or nonliterate man), referring to the idea that the information communicated by such mass media as radio, television, and movies depends upon the oral–aural circuit rather than upon writing or print, then it becomes even more obvious that oral tradition in so-called civilized societies has not been snuffed out by literacy" (1969, 15). We concur that television is more a continuation than a departure for fairy tales. As such, we explore in greater detail how we use the term "fairy tale" and how its re-mediation on television has been explored by TV studies.

Wonder: Fairy Tales and Intertextuality/Intermediality

Stith Thompson calls wonder tales or fairy tales "stories filled with incredible marvels" ([1946] 1977, 21). Folklorists distinguish myths and legends from folktales—which include fairy tales (Bascom 1965)—not by their forms but by "the *attitudes* of the community toward them." Myths seem "both sacred and true. . . . core narratives in larger ideological systems. Concerned with ultimate realities, they are often set outside of historical time . . . and

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frequently concern the actions of divine or semi-divine characters" (Oring 1986, 124). Legends "focus on a single episode . . . which is presented as miraculous, uncanny, bizarre, or sometimes embarrassing. The narration of a legend is, in a sense, the negotiation of the truth of these episodes." This genre, "set in historical time in the world as we know it today . . . often makes reference to real people and places" (ibid., 125). Folktales, in contrast, "are related and received as fiction or fantasy [and] appear in a variety of forms" (ibid., 126). Though fairy tales also come in literary forms, based primarily in an individual author's creativity, most folklorists (including the majority of this volume's contributors) understand fairy tales as *Märchen*: the "tales of magic" numbered 300–749 in the ATU classification (Uther 2004, I:174–396).

Literary tales, "written by an individual, usually identifiable author . . . [may] draw upon preexisting published material for some or all of their characters and plot . . . [but] put them together in a new way . . . [and] exist in only one version, fixed in print" (Harries 2008, 579). This distinction between oral folktales and literary fairy tales, however, is not uncontroversial. Oral fairy tales can come in written forms (such as the collections of the Grimm brothers), but written texts of various forms and genres make their way into oral narratives (see, e.g., Labrie 1997). And the two are rarely discrete in the popular imagination; Andersen's "The Little Mermaid" is generally seen as the same genre as the traditional "Little Red Riding Hood" (ATU 333). Yet distinguishing characteristics go beyond origins and transmission. Traditional wonder tales usually end happily; literary tales often do not. Most Euro–North Americans expect fairy tales' main protagonists to "live happily ever after." But in Andersen and Wilde, the conclusion can be sad or depressing. Contrast the Disney film's happy ending to Andersen's, which concludes with the title character transformed into sea-foam as she fails to marry the prince (see, e.g., Bendix 1993).[12]

Despite fairy tales' ubiquity, TV scholars rarely consider them. A JSTOR search in film studies of "television" plus "fairytale/fairy tale/folktale/folk tale" reveals a generally pejorative use, meaning untruth or implausible fiction. "A docudrama on John F. Kennedy, *Johnny We Hardly Knew Ye* (January 1977, NBC-TV), was termed a 'fairy tale' due to various inaccuracies and distortions" (Hoffer and Nelson 1978, 26). *Into the Woods,* a fairy-tale musical screened on TV is addressed in a casebook (Mankin et al. 1988). More recently, discussions of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* (Wilcox 1999), *Animaniacs* (Dennis 2003), and reality dating shows (Tropiano 2009) reference

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fairy tales. None focuses specifically on the genre though authors mention its key features as show elements: fairy tale as adventure, the "fairy tale cum nightmare" (Schneider 2002), and fairy tales as romance, material success, and magic (Tibbetts 2001). They note recurring "Cinderella" motifs in the sitcom *The Nanny* (Brook 2000), fairy-tale structures in a Disney reality wedding show (Levine 2005), and expectations of happily ever after fostered, and foiled, by the series finales of *Seinfeld* and *The Sopranos* (Corrigan and Corrigan 2012).

Reviewers as culture critics mediate the encoding and decoding of television (Gray 2011). Stuart Elliott (2011) notes that fairy tales were "usually not a strong draw," predicting early cancellation for *Grimm* and *Once Upon a Time*. Despite his erroneous prediction, he sees fairy tales as necessary on TV because "the plots in this world—about the police, detectives, doctors, lawyers—have been told and retold again." Terrence Rafferty (2012) sees *Grimm* and *Once Upon a Time* as more generically apt than the recent films *Red Riding Hood* (2011) and *Beastly* (2011). He attributes this fit to television's seriality: "Maybe the succession of weekly episodes more closely approximates the regularity and one-thing-after-another quality of bedtime stories." To him, *Grimm* and *Once Upon a Time* convey a "neither-here-nor-there feeling" that seems to match "a chronic sense of unreality" that pervades "the developed world."

Vanessa Joosen's approach to fairy tales and contemporary retellings augments these cultural critics' observations. Joosen's discussion of a "horizon of expectation" identifies key features of wonder tales and points out specific changes over time that relate to the proximity between these stories and fantasy and reality. These traits include an indefinite sense of place and time, familiarity with the supernatural, flat characters, quick plot progression and optimistic endings, style marked by fixed formulas and repetitions, and linear telling by a third-person omniscient narrator with no distinguishing marks of identity (2011, 13). Retellings disrupt some or all elements of this horizon of expectation, usually by adding attention to reality. They may be set in a specific, more real place and time; develop boundaries between fantasy and reality; provide character backstory and psychological motivation; challenge happy endings; reduce plot focus in favor of characterization; eliminate repetition while retaining symbolic numbers; and incorporate first-person or other shifts in narration and chronological organization (ibid., 13–15). Televised fairy tales similarly effect such shifts while maintaining recognizable intertextual links with traditional tales. Television's seriality works

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especially well for establishing the horizon of expectation while keying on a fluid relationship of fantasy and reality.

Wonder invokes and responds to this fluid relationship, helping to illuminate fairy tale's persistence in, and even conscription of, new media. When folklorists defined the wonder tale as a canonical study object, they sought to rescue both orality and wonder from the march of literacy and rationality in the eighteenth century (Bendix 1997; Bauman and Briggs 2003; Conrad 2008). The politics of wonder (see Bacchilega 1997, 2013) and intermediality become key to channeling wonder. Bacchilega explores the relationship of magic and wonder in fairy tales' textual, intertextual, and ideological contexts, nuancing histories of the wonder tale by acknowledging both conservative and dynamic forces at play textually and contextually: "The tale of magic produces wonder precisely through its seductively concealed exploitation of the conflict between its *normative* function, which capitalizes on the comforts of consensus, and its *subversive* wonder, which magnifies the powers of transformation" (1997, 7).

Yet she notes a growing disenchantment with magic: "If generally the desired effect of this poetics of enchantment is the consumer's buying into magic, then, the contemporary call for disenchanting the fairy tale is directly related to a now-public dissatisfaction with its magic as trick" (2013, 5). The strong link between magic and advertising analyzed by Dégh and Vázsonyi (1979) and between television and commodification discussed in chapters by Hay and Baxter and Bacchilega and Rieder suggests televised tales are complicit in magic as trickery and still open to wonder in an era of convergence culture and commodification. "Actively contesting an impoverished poetics of magic, a renewed, though hardly cohesive, poetics and politics of wonder are at work in the contemporary cultural production and reception of fairy tales" (Bacchilega 2013, 6). The magic of televised tales may be a trick to sell products and even desirable life experiences; consider the reality dating shows Lee's chapter analyzes. Still, the variety of approaches to fairy tale on television, in both its production and reception, confirms the ongoing possibility of wonder as both an emotional state related to awe and marvel and an active possibility of pursuing curiosity and inquiry (Bacchilega 2013, 191). Brodie and McDavid's, Sawin's, and Bacchilega and Rieder's autoethnographies, along with references to fan communities in chapters by Hay and Baxter and Nelson and Walton, show viewers who wonder about and with the fairy tales they view on television.

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Although folklorists define wonder tales using the imperative of orality, Bacchilega's approach to a poetics and politics of magic and wonder shows this to be only a starting place. Zipes affirms, "In the last forty or fifty years, folklorists, literary critics, historians, and scholars of folklore and fairy tales from many different countries have been more interested in the intersections between the oral and literary traditions than trying to privilege one over the other" (2012, 164). Greenhill and Matrix observe that the genre is "a shape-shifter and medium breaker" (2010a, 3). Here we suggest the fairy tale just might also be a medium *maker*. Spanning space and time, normative and transformative, changing as it replicates magic and wonder, fairy tale is an early and persistent mode for successive communicative technologies. This use value may accrue because humans crave stories and wonder. As Gordon Henry, Jr. observes, "Stories seem to transcend jurisdictions of nation, culture, time and text, irrespective of whether they are spoken, written, heard, smelled, filmed or performed. . . . Stories are intertextual, transcendent, evocative, and arguably efficacious" (2009, 18; see also Frank 2010). Intermediality recognizes the fairy tale's transcendent jurisdiction as an elemental story type.

Like many analytical terms, "intermediality" comes with a plethora of definitions and related possibilities: media, transmedial, multimedial, plurimedial (Wolf 2011, 4). Foregrounding the sense of relationship associated with "inter," we prefer "intermediality" to encourage attention to how the fairy tale engages semiotic modes and technological channels. Marina Grishakova and Marie-Laure Ryan state, "In a narrow sense, [intermediality] refers to the participation of more than one medium—or sensory channel—in a given work" (2010, 3). Ryan also advocates studying narrative across media because most narratology "directs us to the importance of narrative in mostly language-based practices" but attending across media "focuses on the embodiment . . . the particular semiotic substance and the technological mode of transmission of narrative" (2004, 1). Television, inherently intermedial, simultaneously involves sound and sight.

But traditional expression, including story, also is inherently intermedial. Barre Toelken asserts that folklore's medium is not its only message: "Folklorists deal with a particular and well-established species of learning and expression which uses culture-based interactive codes and formulas. It occurs with or without literacy" (1996, 47). While folklorists may prefer studying materials transmitted in face-to-face communication, they also acknowledge that people use new media to share stories and other traditional

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expressions (see Blank 2009, 2012). Because variation is key to tradition and more specifically to folklore's interactive codes and formulas, intertextuality has proven valuable to fairy-tale scholarship (Smith 2007; Greenhill and Matrix 2010a, 2010b; Joosen 2011). We offer intermediality as a corollary, not as an end in itself. Rather than simply spotting the fairy tale in each different medium or new technology, intermediality can offer a better understanding of what fairy tales do to clarify a human need for channeling wonder.

Tiffin (2009, 228) suggests a trend in fairy-tale film toward pastiche and irony. Recent Disney productions have aimed at pastiche, apparently refusing (while simultaneously affirming) the fairy-tale ethos that their earlier work enforced and reinforced (see, e.g., Bacchilega and Rieder 2010; Pershing and Gablehouse 2010). Yet a multitude of other recent films, especially from outside the United States and the Hollywood blockbuster machine, show various ways fairy tales can be successfully reworked and reinterpreted.[13] Arguably, as *Channeling Wonder* demonstrates, the rereading of fairy tales in their re-mediation on television has been even more extreme than in the cinema.

The example of television offers an understanding of how rapidly changing and adapting media systems incorporate both new and old materials and perspectives. As early as 2004, Lynn Spigel listed: "The demise of the three-network system in the United States, the increasing commercialization of public service/state-run systems, the rise of multichannel cable and global satellite delivery, multinational conglomerates, Internet convergence, changes in regulation policies and ownership rules, the advent of HDTV, technological changes in screen design, the innovation of digital televisions systems . . . and new forms of media competition" (2004, 2). Lezubski's chapter on the anime *Revolutionary Girl Utena* implicates how intermedial relations affect texts. With manga (comic book) preceding the anime television series and the feature film following, TV cannot be entirely divorced from the other media—all of which use fairy-tale themes and characters. In particular, a crucial intermedial relation has developed between television and the internet:

> It is silly to see the Internet in opposition to television; each is one more way of sending and receiving the other. The fact is that television is becoming *more* popular, not less. It is here to stay, whether we like it or not. I suspect that we are witnessing a *transformation* of TV, rather than its demise. What started in most countries as a *broadcast, national* medium, dominated by the state, is being transformed

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into a *cable, satellite, Internet,* and *international* medium, dominated by commerce—but still called "television." (Miller 2010, 19)

Transformations and interactions between social media and other internet forms are present in Hay and Baxter's consideration of *Once Upon a Time* and Nelson and Walton's of *Merlin*. Fan involvement goes beyond commenting on the series; they can choose to play games based on the series, write fan fiction, and/or edit video interpretations. While commerce is certainly an aim in the networks' and producers' encouragement of these activities, they cannot entirely control how audiences will re/present the shows they see. The potential remains for resistant texts to damage the reputation, undermine the branding, and skew the intended audience of a TV show.

Haase notes the importance of television as a mode for disseminating fairy-tale films of all types, in particular acknowledging that "repeated televised broadcasts of Victor Fleming's 1939 feature film *The Wizard of Oz* became a popular tradition that helped to enrich the American experience of fairy tale" (2008, 948). Similarly, with respect to Jacques Demy's *Donkey Skin* (Peau d'âne, 1970), "While *Peau d'âne* will strike Americans as rather offbeat, to say the least—with elements of scatological humor, implied incest, wild anachronisms, and eye-popping visual design—it is a well-known and beloved fairy tale in France. Indeed, it is probably Demy's most familiar film among French audiences, due to its enormous appeal with children and repeated television showings over the years—not to mention its wickedly tongue-in-cheek approach to the enchanted fairy-tale genre" (Hill 2005–2006, 40). This film underlines Euro–North American television's bourgeois and often culturally circumscribed audiences. French exchange students in Pauline's fairy-tale film course affirmed to their shocked Canadian colleagues that, indeed, they had seen and enjoyed *Peau d'âne* as children. Most North Americans would exclude the film from childhood television fare because of its focus on the king's incestuous desire for his daughter. Similarly, television anime fare like *Revolutionary Girl Utena* (see Lezubski's chapter) is unlikely to ever make mainstream North American television screens or to be seen as child friendly, given its explorations of transgender, heterosex, and homosex.[14] Though Disney's *Mulan* (1998) includes a cross-dressing character, her chaste yet heterosexual alibi is retained throughout the film and there is no play with the idea of a female among a group of soldiers.[15] These issues of age, gender, beastliness, and commerce pattern the chapters in *Channeling Wonder*.

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Overview

The chapters in "For and about Kids and Adults" underline how television's time segmentation, as well as its ideology, presumes specific age groups as audiences. Yet, as Brodie and McDavid's chapter indicates, even though *Super Why!* is directed at children, parents or other adult caregivers are rarely absent. The writers' autoethnographic focus upon their own positions as folklorists as well as parents organizes their examination of the benefits and drawbacks of using traditional culture in such contexts. Nelson and Walton address a show intended for young adults, considering how *Merlin* uses fairy-tale plots, tropes, and characters to offer lessons to the targeted age group. Yet the show also exploits various new-media platforms to extend its targeted demographic's participation. Tresca looks at how "Hansel and Gretel" is interpellated into individual episodes of an astonishing variety of TV genres. Though the story's historical context, in which underclass poverty and starvation lead parents to desperate acts, remains part of contemporary North America, these shows instead focus upon children's potential for independence and autonomy. Rudy's consideration of *The StoryTeller* shows how its intermedial complexities construct taleworlds and storyrealms that resonate for multiple audiences. Viewers are not constructed by age but instead as distinctive televisual interlocutors.

In "Masculinities and/or Femininities," the authors address modes for constructing and interpreting sex and gender. Sawin's autoethnography takes readers through her experience of the 1965 *Cinderella* musical as offering sometimes compliant, but also potentially feminist, views. Rather than dogmatically dismissing its focus upon princess culture, she playfully asks readers to consider whether fantasy may have value outside a literalist reading. Barber looks at how three Japanese television shows play with concepts of masculinity and femininity. She notes that increasingly, in changing economic contexts, appearance has become salient in conventional Japanese ideas about men, replacing former ideas about loyalty to employers and dedication to family. "Sleeping Beauty" gets attention in two quite disjunctive shows, the Japanese anime *Grimm's Fairy Tale Classics* and television auteur Joss Whedon's *Dollhouse*. Despite the unlikeliness of a protagonist who sleeps until she's rescued by a prince being seen as anything other than heteropatriarchal, Jorgensen and Warman locate feminist possibilities in the readings these shows offer. Lezubski turns to yet another Japanese anime series, exploring how *Revolutionary Girl Utena* directly offers uncoded

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transgressive sexes, sexualities, and genders. She juxtaposes these not only with the more compliant *Sailor Moon* series but also with real and fictive royalty and their travails in the Japanese press.

"Beastly Humans" works though shows that arguably operate on the edge—if not directly in the middle—of the horror genre. Greenhill and Kohm examine the British *Red Riding Trilogy* and its attention to the brutal and inhumane qualities of institutionally, economically, and socially powerful men. As in Charles Perrault's version of the fairy tale "Little Red Riding Hood," innocent victims rarely escape with their lives. *Grimm,* as discussed by Willsey, offers a somewhat more cheery perspective, despite its implicit homophone "grim." It presents the historical and diegetical Grimms as the enemies of evil "Wesen," while indicating that humans can be more brutal than these apparent beasts. Wright considers how *Snow White: A Tale of Terror* offers an unlikely sympathetic figure in the fairy tale's wicked stepmother. But again, the true beasts are human beings who, lacking help from others, cannot move beyond their personal tragedies. Breillat's *Bluebeard* gives Barzilai an opportunity to explore intriguing visual filmic references. She links them not only to artistic representations but also to the filmmaker's feminist intentions.

"Fairy Tales Are Real! Reality TV, Fairy-Tale Reality, Commerce, and Discourse" turns to issues that have long fascinated television scholars—the medium's links between art and economics. Lee's chapter begins the section with a nuanced consideration of how various reality shows employ fairy-tale themes and ideas. Even less obvious candidates, like house makeover shows, work through notions of renovation as a "fairy tale"—and are too often followed by unfortunate consequences that deconstruct the idea that after transformation, everyone will "live happily ever after." Schwabe explores the different modes through which fantasy and real worlds interact in two recent fairy-tale long-arc serials. Developing a typology of the links, she locates the historical roots of these forms in magic realist literature and film implicating the wonder tale. In contrast, Hay and Baxter consider the specific interactions between fairy tales and commodities seen in *Once Upon a Time* as a new development for Disney on television. They show how sympathetic backstories engage viewers with otherwise apparently unpromising characters like the evil queen, bringing a diverse and committed audience to the long-arc serial. Even more direct links with TV's profit-seeking purpose can be seen in Bacchilega and Rieder's autoethnographic work on the Italian *Carosello* commercial/show and the American *Fractured Fairy Tales.* Both

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transcend their uses of seriality, by addressing and sometimes lampooning their audiences' national and personal self-concepts and, paradoxically, avoiding fairy-tale commodity fetishism.

Channeling Wonder closes with Magnus-Johnston's elaboration of the joys (and mostly the sorrows) of working to construct a teleography that represents fairy tales on TV. As the teleography that follows shows, the fairy tale's ubiquitous presence in the medium, crossing genres, modes, and content styles, renders truly impossible anything like complete coverage but displays compelling possibilities. Now, we invite readers to go with the flow, sitting there with this book hour after hour, or to channel surf from chapter to chapter. Mostly, we encourage wonder with fairy tales on television.

Notes

1. Haase (2000b, 2008) offers the beginnings of a history of fairy tales on television. Unfortunately, a fuller account of the topic is beyond our scope.
2. The tale type index originated by Aarne, edited and updated by Thompson and then again by Uther (2004; discussed below) numbers traditional international folktales.
3. Tiffin examines *Snow White: A Tale of Terror* (see Wright's chapter; 2009, 204–6). Zipes (1997) considers the television creations of Jim Henson (see Rudy's chapter) and Shelley Duvall as alternatives to Disney. He mentions that Catherine Breillat's *Bluebeard* (2009) was made for French television (2011, 167–68). However, perhaps because, as Barzilai's chapter discusses, it lacks obvious textual markers—like an episodic structure friendly to commercial interruption—he explores this origin no further.
4. Tiffin refers to current film cultures, but her insight applies equally to television (see, e.g., Hay and Baxter's chapter).
5. Wilson writes of the aesthetic impulse not as a "move beyond practical need—beyond necessity" but as a "move to a deeper necessity, to the deeper human need to create order, beauty, and meaning out of chaos" (2006, 13).
6. *Alice,* at 240 minutes, and *Tin Man,* at 270, are at least twice the length of most longer cinematic features; *The 10th Kingdom,* at 417, is over three times that duration.
7. Presumptions that this absence reflects a lack of queer and trans in fairy tales are simply wrong (see, e.g., Turner and Greenhill 2012).
8. Some film scholars mistake paradigmatic and syntagmatic structures for the traditional folktales themselves, taking the form as its own manifestations (see, e.g., McLean 1998, 4). Just as a girl wearing a red hooded coat doesn't make a "Little Red Riding Hood" film (see, e.g., Kohm and Greenhill 2013), binary oppositions and helper figures do not make a television show myth or fairy tale. It would be difficult to find *any* television show entirely lacking in binary oppositions and helpers (see also Fell 1977; Harriss 2008). David Bordwell notes wryly, "For many critics, Propp has become the Aristotle of film narratology; yet his influence has come at the cost of serious misunderstandings" (1988, 5).

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9. Exceptions include Sherman (e.g., 1998, 2005), Koven (e.g., 2003, 2007), and Sherman and Koven (2007).
10. As discussed below, *Märchen* is the German term for the wonder tale comprising the "Tales of Magic," numbers 300–749 in Uther's tale type index (2004).
11. The success of extremely repetitive reality TV shows like *What Not to Wear* indicates that reiterating structures are no drawback. Brodie and McDavid's chapter explores how *Super Why!* uses this familiarity to resonate with children. Indeed, it can be difficult to separate structure from content in most shows for the very young.
12. For more about distinctions between and among oral and literary fairy tales, see Zipes (2000) and Oring (1986).
13. Consider, for example, *Pan's Labyrinth* (2006) and *The Fall* (2006). See also Zipes, Greenhill, and Magnus-Johnston's forthcoming edited collection *Fairy Tale Films beyond Disney: International Perspectives*.
14. Series like *The Rose of Versailles* (1979–1980) incorporate cross-dressing, and *Kasimasi: Girl Meets Girl* (2006) brings transgender.
15. In contrast, traditional broadside ballads explore ideas around sexual attraction and sometimes also sexual relations between the cross-dressed woman and the men and women she encounters (see Greenhill 1995).

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