

**ENGL 4600W, ONCE OR TWICE UPON A  
TIME: FAIRY TALES & ADAPTATIONS**

Fall 2015, MWF, 11:15 am – 12:05 pm  
Oak Hall, Room 239

**Professor Victoria Ford Smith**

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**Office hours:** Tuesdays 1 pm – 3 pm,  
Wednesdays 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm, by  
appointment.



Gustave Doré, illustration from *Les Contes de Perrault*, dessins par Gustave Doré. Paris: J. Hetzel, 1867.

**Course Description:** “The way to read a fairy tale is to throw yourself in,” said W. H. Auden, and in this course we’ll be following his advice. We will examine fairy tales and their transformations across place, time, and genre. Our reading list includes stories considered fundamental to the fairy tale canon, primarily from the Brothers Grimm and Charles Perrault, as well as narratives inspired by those stories for a spectrum of audiences. While we will touch on film, our discussions will center on print media, including children’s and young adult literature, novels, short fiction, poetry, and graphic narrative. Throughout the semester, we will be attentive to the tales’ historical and social contexts; to how they respond to critical lenses such as queer theory, psychoanalytic theory, and adaptation theory; and to the shifting cultural discourses that surround fairy tales and their retellings.

This is a W course. Therefore, we will discuss throughout the semester research and writing strategies, focusing in particular (in the language of UConn’s General Education Guidelines) on “how writing can ground, extend, deepen, and even enable” your learning of course material.

**Required Texts:** All required texts for this course (except *Wolves in the Walls*) are available at the bookstore. You also can purchase them elsewhere or borrow them from a library. It will be easier to follow along in class if you purchase the editions indicated by the ISBNs below. I will provide supplementary material through HuskyCT and library reserves.

- Charlotte Brontë, *Jane Eyre* (Penguin, 0141441143)
- Emily Carroll, *Through the Woods* (Margaret K. McElderry Books, 1442465964)
- Neil Gaiman and Dave McKean, *The Wolves in the Walls* (9780380810956)
- Marissa Meyer, *Cinder* (Square Fish, 1250007208)
- Patrick Ness and Jim Kay, *A Monster Calls* (Candlewick, 0763660655)
- Helen Oyeyemi, *Boy, Snow, Bird* (Riverhead, 1594633401)
- Maria Tatar (ed.), *The Classic Fairy Tales* (Norton, 0393972771)

**Assignments:** I evaluate your performance in this class through the following assignments. You must complete all assignments to pass the course. You will receive more information about written work as deadlines approach. See information below about class participation.

Assignment	Due Date	Percentage of final grade
Short Papers	Short Paper #1: September 28, 5 pm Short Paper #2: October 28, 5 pm	10 percent each
Research Paper	Draft: October 14, 5 pm Revision: December 9, 5 pm	Draft: 15 percent Revision: 25 percent
Short Paper Revision	November 11, 5 pm	10 percent
Oral Presentation	varies by student	15 percent
Class participation	throughout semester	15 percent

I assign a numerical grade for each assignment. Those values translate into letter grades as follows:

A:	94–100	B–:	80–83	D+:	67–69
A–:	90–93	C+:	77–79	D:	64–66
B+:	87–89	C:	74–76	D–:	60–63
B:	84–86	C–:	70–73	F:	0–59

**Class Participation:** Our course will be successful only with your participation. Participation entails attending class, arriving on time, and engaging in discussion and group activities. *You will not receive an A in participation if you simply attend and listen or if you contribute only occasionally.* I expect to hear your voice because your classmates and I value your point of view, and your perspective makes our work together more productive. If you are reluctant to contribute to discussions, see me and we will talk over strategies to ease your anxiety. I insist upon participation not because I want to penalize shy students but because speaking up, either through comments or questions, is an important part of learning, in the classroom and beyond. I calculate your final participation grade by assigning you a letter grade for each class meeting based on the rubric below. I average these daily grades at the end of the semester.

A	Student demonstrates excellent preparation and contributes to discussions thoughtfully and frequently without being called on, using his or her comments to respond to classmates.
B	Student demonstrates good preparation and contributes to discussions thoughtfully relatively frequently without being called on.
C	Student demonstrates adequate preparation and contributes thoughtfully but only when called on, infrequently engaging in class voluntarily.
D	Student does not engage in class, contributing little and only when called on, and demonstrates that s/he is unprepared or inattentive (e.g. texting or chatting).
F	Student is present but asleep, extremely inattentive, or disruptive.

**Attendance Policy:** You must attend class to succeed in my course. You are allotted four absences. After you reach this four-absence limit, I will penalize your class participation grade one letter grade per absence. If you are 15 minutes late or more for a class meeting, I consider you absent. *Notifying me that you will be absent does not mean that the absence is excused.* I understand that you sometimes must miss classes for doctor's appointments, minor illnesses, transportation issues, family obligations, or travel. I recommend saving your absences for these circumstances. I excuse absences very rarely and only in extenuating circumstances. Athletes or others who will miss classes due to university events must provide me with their schedules as early in the semester as possible.

**Technology:** Silence and put away your cell phone during class. I allow the use of laptops, iPads, and similar devices during class, especially since many of our readings and presentations will be available online. However, I reserve the right to ask all students to put them away. I also reserve the right to embarrass you if I find you playing Words with Friends or watching a video of a cat playing the piano.

**Meetings and email correspondence:** I am happy to talk at any time during the semester. You can find my office hours and contact information at the top of this syllabus. Feel free to make an appointment or stop by. I am also happy to correspond with you by email. Emails should be composed in a professional manner. This means they should begin with a salutation, be written in complete sentences, demonstrate correct spelling and punctuation, and end with a signature. I respond to emails within two business days.

**Late work:** I do not accept assignments of any kind submitted after the due date unless we have made prior arrangements. A late paper or other assignment will receive a failing grade. I advise completing all assignments early to ensure that you can submit them without problems. I will discuss extensions only 48 hours or more in advance of an assignment's due date.

**Academic Integrity:** In this course we will conduct ourselves as a community of scholars. You are encouraged to build on the ideas and texts of others; that is a vital part of academic life. However, when you use someone else's ideas or language—through quotation, summary, or paraphrase—you must formally acknowledge that debt with a standard form of academic citation. We will use the MLA documentation system, and we will review the standards of that system in class. I am always available to answer any questions about proper citation. Even one occasion of academic dishonesty on any assignment will result in failure for the entire course and referral to Student Judicial Affairs. For university policies on academic honesty, see [UConn's Office of Community Standards](#).

**Students With Disabilities:** The University of Connecticut is committed to protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities and assuring that the learning environment is accessible. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers based on disability or pregnancy, please let me know immediately so that we can discuss options. Students who require accommodations should contact the [Center for Students with Disabilities](#), Wilbur Cross Building Room 204, (860) 486-2020.

**Reading Schedule:** Complete all reading assigned for each meeting and bring a copy of the reading with you to class. Readings followed by (CFT) are included in *The Classic Fairy Tales*, ed. Maria Tatar. Readings followed by (HCT) are available on HuskyCT. This syllabus is subject to change. During the semester, we may discover that we want to spend more time on certain topics and less time on others (or inclement weather may foil our plans). I will change the schedule if doing so would benefit most students' learning. I will announce all changes in class and, if necessary, post a revised syllabus on HuskyCT.

Date	Readings and other information
M Aug 29	Introduction to the course
W Aug 31	Linda Hutcheon, "Beginning to Theorize Adaptation" from <i>A Theory of Adaptation</i> (available as an e-book through UConn's library). In class: developing questions for adaptations and testing them out.
F Sept 2	Donald Haase, "Yours, Mine, or Ours? Perrault, the Brothers Grimm, and the Ownership of Fairy Tales" (CFT); Brothers Grimm, introductions to <i>Kinder- und Hausmarchen</i> (HCT).
M Sept 5	No class due to Labor Day holiday.
W Sept 7	Introduction to "Hansel and Gretel"; Brothers Grimm, "Hansel and Gretel"; Bruno Bettelheim "The Struggle for Meaning" and "Hansel and Gretel" (CFT).
F Sept 9	Anne E. Duggan, "Ideology and the Importance of Socio-Political and Gender Contexts" (HCT); Anne Sexton, "Hansel and Gretel" (HCT); Amelia Hamilton, "Hansel and Gretel (Have Guns)" (HCT).
M Sept 12	Kate Bernheimer, "Fairy Tale is Form, Form Is Fairy Tale" (HCT); Neil Gaiman, "Instructions" (HCT).
W Sept 14	Introduction to "Cinderella"; Charles Perrault, "Donkeyskin"; Brothers Grimm, "Cinderella" (CFT).
F Sept 16	Excerpt from Jack Zipes, <i>Fairy Tale Is Myth/Myth is Fairy Tale</i> (HCT); Aimee Bender, "The Color Master" (HCT).
M Sept 19	Eric S. Rabkin, "Fairy Tales and Science Fiction" (HCT); Stanislaw Lem, "Tale of the Computer That Fought a Dragon" (HCT).
W Sept 21	Marissa Meyer, <i>Cinder</i>
F Sept 23	Marissa Meyer, <i>Cinder</i>
M Sept 26	Marissa Meyer, <i>Cinder</i>

W Sept 28	<b>Final day to submit Short Paper #1</b> Marissa Meyer, <i>Cinder</i> and Jennifer Mitchell, "'A girl. A machine. A freak': A Consideration of Contemporary Queer Composites" (HCT).
F Sept 30	Introduction to "Little Red Riding Hood"; "The Story of the Grandmother"; Charles Perrault, "Little Red Riding Hood"; and Brothers Grimm, "Little Red Cap" (CFT).
M Oct 3	Audre Lorde, "The Uses of the Erotic" (HCT); Angela Carter, "The Company of Wolves" (HCT); David Kaplan's "Little Red Riding Hood" (HCT).
W Oct 5	Francesca Lia Block, "Wolf" (HCT).
F Oct 7	Ursula LeGuin, "The Child and the Shadow" (HCT); Neil Gaiman and Dave McKean, <i>The Wolves in the Walls</i> (HCT).
M Oct 10	Introduction to "Bluebeard" and Charles Perrault, "Bluebeard" (CFT).
W Oct 12	William Thackeray, <i>The Awful History of Bluebeard</i> (HCT) and, in class, a discussion of Bluebeard among the Victorians.
F Oct 14	<b>Final day to submit Research Paper, Draft 1</b> Margarita Blush visit, introduction
M Oct 17	Charlotte Brontë, <i>Jane Eyre</i>
W Oct 19	Charlotte Brontë, <i>Jane Eyre</i>
F Oct 21	Margarita Blush visit, workshop
M Oct 24	Charlotte Brontë, <i>Jane Eyre</i> ; Jeanne-Marie Leprince de Beaumont, "Beauty and the Beast" (CFT)
W Oct 26	Edna St. Vincent Millay, "Bluebeard" (HCT); Maya Angelou, "The Detached" (HCT); Sylvia Plath, "Bluebeard" (HCT).
F Oct 28	<b>Final day to submit Short Paper #2</b> Nalo Hopkinson, "The Glass Bottle Trick" (HCT); Natalie Robinson, "Constructing the Postcolonial 'Bluebeard' Tale in Nalo Hopkinson's 'The Glass Bottle Trick'" (HCT).
M Oct 31	Theodore P. Cook, "Blue Beard" (HCT) and Winslow Homer, "The Blue Beard Tableau" (HCT).
W Nov 2	Introduction to "Snow White"; Brothers Grimm, "Snow White"; excerpt from Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, "Snow White and Her Wicked Stepmother"

	(CFT).
F Nov 4	Watch <i>Disney's Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs</i> (on reserve at the library).
M Nov 7	Jack Zipes, "Breaking the Disney Spell" (CFT).
W Nov 9	Emma Donoghue, "The Tale of the Apple" (HCT); Cristina Bacchilega, "Fairy Tales and the Ideology of Gender" (HCT).
F Nov 11	<b>Final day to submit revision of short paper</b> In class, discussion of race and "Snow White." Read Lucille Clifton, "what the mirror said" (HCT) and examine Carrie Mae Weems, <i>Mirror Mirror</i> (HCT).
M Nov 14	Helen Oyeyemi, <i>Boy, Snow, Bird</i>
W Nov 16	Helen Oyeyemi, <i>Boy, Snow, Bird</i>
F Nov 18	Helen Oyeyemi, <i>Boy, Snow, Bird</i>
M Nov 21 – F Nov 25	No class due to Thanksgiving Break.
M Nov 28	Buffer class period. Material TBD.
W Nov 30	Patrick Ness, first half of <i>A Monster Calls</i>
F Dec 2	Patrick Ness, second half of <i>A Monster Calls</i> ; excerpt from Cathy Caruth, <i>Unclaimed Experience: Trauma, Narrative, and History</i> (HCT)
M Dec 5	Gail de Vos, "Folktales and the Comic Book Format" (HCT); Emily Carroll, "Our Neighbor's House" and "A Lady's Hands Are Cold" from <i>Through the Woods</i>
W Dec 7	Emily Carroll, "His Face All Red" and "In Conclusion" from <i>Through the Woods</i>
F Dec 9	<b>Final day to submit revised research paper</b> Wrapping up and synthesis.