

Critical analysis rapunzel



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Critical Analysis of the fairytale ??? Rapunzel??™ In today??™s society it is naturally assumed that the appropriate audience for fairy tales are the children and infants of the generations, whom will age having remembered these tales. With clear applicable morals, these tales are expected to be passed down through generation to generation, as they have through the centuries from their assumed oral source. However, if an individual was to take only one of the many fairytales circulating in bedrooms of young children today and trace it back to its source – oral or literary, they would find that fairytales once had much darker, adult elements laced throughout.

Well known by young girls, the tale of ??? Rapunzel??™ in the dominant form depicts an awfully different concept to that in which it was originally written. The first known literary source of Rapunzel was in a collection of fairy tales by Italian folklorist Giambattista Basile in 1634. Here the tale took the name of ??? Petrosinella??™.

Sixty years later, another reading appeared by Charlotte Rose de Caumont de la Force known as ??? Persinette??™. In 1812 the tale was translated by the well known German scholars ??“ Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, and became ??? Rapunzel.??™ Throughout the transformation of the tale it is evident that the context and culture in which it is received effects the content and themes of the tale, as well as the language. This in turn alters the values and attitudes reflected from the tale. Common features of fairytales can also be seen in all readings of Rapunzel, some more prominent than others as the tale progresses through time. The first and second literary versions of ??? Rapunzel??™, known as ??? Petrosinella??™ and ??? Persinette??™ had their roots bound deeply in the adult fairytale movement

of the time. This can be seen in the less subtle hints of sexuality in the two readings.

In ??? Petrosinella??™, she welcomes the prince, and matters went so well that ??? there was soon a nodding of heads and a kissing of hands...

Petrosinella and the prince became so intimate that they made an appointment to meet.??? The sexual references continue in ??? Persinette??™; however Persinette does remain hesitant at the appearance of the prince and is portrayed to be innocent as she does not realize she has fallen pregnant. The Grimm brothers originally published in 1812 a version of Rapunzel similar to these. ??? They lived in joy and pleasure for a long time..

. Frau Gothel, tell me why it is that my clothes are all too tight They no longer fit me.??? The references to the sexuality of Rapunzel and her innocence still remain. Although, the brothers believed wrongly that their fairytales would be of interest only to scholars, and when confronted with the extended audience they eliminated many of the sexual references and created a chaste young woman suitable for young children??™s minds. In some readings, the twins born to the prince which magically appear in the later editions of the Grimm??™s brothers versions are also eliminated. This is an indication of the relationship between the fairytale and the context and audience in which it??™s received.

The demanding younger audiences and the need for the tales to be suitable in terms of morals for the particular context have caused the content and ideas of the story to change considerably. The style and language of a text always relates to the authors intention of depicting the subject and content.

The language and style used in ??? Rapunzel??™ has been altered over the years to accommodate the changing cultures and contexts and hence the changing subject and content of the fairytale. In the first known reading ??? Petrosinella??™, intensive imagery is explored, firstly highlighting the intended audience of adults.

??? The next morning, before the Sun taught his steeds to leap through the hoop of the Zodiac, the prince descended by the same golden ladder, to go his way home.??? Secondly, the language used exposes the true subject of the maturing and loss of innocence in Petrosinella and her ability to now choose her own fate. ??? Petrosinella should give the ogress some poppy juice, and draw up the prince with her tresses.??? In the reading ??? Persinette??™ the language explored is similar, however, Persinette retains her innocence and it is emphasized though the language the power of forgiveness and true love come the end of the tale. It is not until the Grimm??™s brother??™s translation of the tale and the way in which they altered it throughout their editions that the significant changes in language and style, and the way they reflect subject can be seen. Comparing their 7th edition published in 1857 to their 1st published in 1812, the watering down of the remaining adult themes laced in the language and the introduction of descriptive, colourful words mirrors the changes in subject the brothers implicated. The brothers also incorporated some references to the Christian faith in their editions. ??? The woman came to believe that the good Lord would fulfil her wish.

??? The use of this language suggests the brother??™s knowledge of the expanding audience of the fairytale, and therefore the need to alter the

subject and content of in order to satisfy the audience. Regardless of the changes ??? Rapunzel??™ has suffered through time, within the fairytale genre, there are elements common to the majority of fairytales which are evident in all versions of the tale, helping it to remain a ??? fairytale??™ and not simply a bedtime story. According to M. Kotzin??™s summary of the many elements of fairytales, all readings of Rapunzel include elements such as the presence of magical acts, an unnaturally quick or unnaturally slow passage of time, an isolated, virtuous young woman, a villain such as an ogre or witch, (in the 1st edition Grimm??™s and ??? Persinette??™ a fairy) and marriage as a reward for overcoming the trials and tribulations the central character receives. However, through the alteration of the tale some elements have been included and neglected. In ??? Petrosinella??™ and ??? Persinette??™, the common theme of three recurring trials the hero or heroine must overcome is present, although this has been left out in the Grimm??™s editions.

In ??? Persinette??™ the common element of repetition is introduced, something that makes fairy tales such as Rapunzel so memorable. ??? Persinette, let down your hair.??? This simple sentence has morphed into the well known line known by children and adults alike. ??? Rapunzel, Rapunzel, let down your hair.??? In the latest readings of ??? Rapunzel??™ the element of the prince rescuing the princess has become more evident than ever before, highlighting the new meaning of the fairytale aimed at young children. It becomes apparent that the context and culture in which ??? Rapunzel??™ is received will change the content, language and even fairytale elements of the text, and consequently the values and attitudes it

reflects. Rapunzel has transformed from an intricate adult tale exploring the loss of innocence in Rapunzel and her ability to choose her own fate into a memorable yet watered down children's tale of an innocent girl wanting to escape with her prince.

Nevertheless, fairytales such as Rapunzel will continue to be passed through generation to generation tirelessly, and the morals and attitudes portrayed through the tales will continue to reflect the context and culture in which the tale stands.?