

‘Its Time to Give this Wretched World the Queen it Deserves’: Investigating the Wicked Queen in Contemporary Narratives



ONCE UPON A TIME:

Before appearing in the written form, fairy-tale and folklore were orally communicated in the form of narratives. They often carry a message which aims to instruct the reader. This message is often adapted to conform to the norms of the various cultures the narratives appear across. Zipes supports this when he states how fairy-tales: “...introduce listeners to the ‘proper’ way to become a member of a particular community” (Zipes 3).

INTENDED OUTCOMES:

I hope to establish a connection between the narrative alignment of the recipient with the Wicked Queen character in my primary texts, with a shift in interpretation and reaction to the character in relation to her function solely as an antagonist.

NARRATIVE:

Narrative voice has power over the recipient of a narrative. This is due to how it functions as the perspective from which the reader interprets the events of the narrative., as Lacey suggests the narrator “is a character through whom the narration passes ... where we are given a particular character’s point of view”. (Lacey 109). So, for example, reactions may be different if, in Snow White, the narrator was the Wicked Queen...

METHODOLOGY:

I expect to achieve this aim through close textual analysis of my primary texts, combined by the utilisation of a theoretical framework of contemporary fairy-tale and narrative theory. My primary texts are a selection of films and YA novels published and released between 1997-2017.

CONTEMPORARY EXAMPLES:

Recently examples of such fairy-tale retellings have become apparent in both mainstream film and young adult (YA) fiction. Examples being YA novel *Mirror Mirror* (2003) by Gregory Maguire, *Snow White: Fairest of Them All* a 2001 film starring Miranda Richardson and *Fairest of All* (2009) A YA novel by Serena Valentino.

RESEARCH AIM:

To analyse the effect of the varying degrees of narrative re-focalisation of the Wicked Queen character, that occurs in my primary texts, in relation to the representation and characterisation of her as an antagonist.

