

College Junior

*Happily Ever After
in the media?*

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EDT180B
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How does the prevalence of Disney's fairy tales affect our vision of women?

WARNING: These fairy tales may contain language and imagery that is detrimental to your child. Use appropriate judgment when allowing your children to view and absorb the content of these stories. Be certain to remind them that they have potential to be strong, confident, independent women. They need not emulate the subservience of the characters shown.

Once upon a time there was a beautiful young girl who wanted to grow up to be just like Cinderella. She pranced around the house in a crown and a fancy dress, knowing that her evil stepsister could never keep her from being a member of royalty. She had an undying faith that when she grew up, her strong, handsome prince would rescue her on his white horse. They would ride off into the sunset and have an extravagant wedding. And, of course, they would live happily ever after.

Dear Reader,

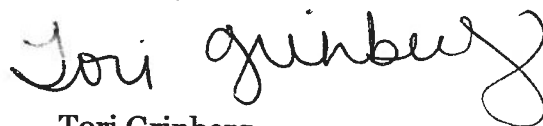
The paragraph above contains a plethora of stereotypes that are fed to us beginning at a young age and then normalized throughout the years. This is an appalling detriment to women and men alike. We are fortunate enough to live in a relatively progressive society, making it even more mind-boggling that the unsuitable themes present in fairy tales can still be perpetuated.

Theoretically, that young girl would eventually grow up. She would learn that being beautiful does not mean that she is incapable. She would learn that a man does not need to rescue her, and even if he did, he would most likely not be riding a white horse during said rescue. This grown girl would also realize that an extravagant marriage does not *always* lead to happily ever after. She would know that marriage takes work. Hard work.

However, some girls do not have those revelations. In fact, I've heard many of my friends say things like, "Someday my prince is going to come," or other phrases of the sort. These same friends also watch shows like *The Bachelor* or *Joe Millionaire*. Do not get me wrong; I see the need for fairy tales. Pretending and fantasizing is an important part of childhood. But when these illusory elements are modernized and authenticated as a part of our adult society, they become detrimental.

Strong, independent women are not shown in fairy tales. Princesses never have jobs. Marriage is their only goal in life. Moreover, their lives are solely defined by the handsome men in the story. I do not mean to sound cynical because I am not. I watch Disney movies; I sing along to the songs; I think it's cute when the girls I baby-sit dress up like Belle and Cinderella. I see a place in our culture for fairy tales. But, more importantly, I see a place for empowered women.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tori Grinberg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tori" and last name "Grinberg" clearly distinguishable.

Tori Grinberg

DICTIONARY OF FAIRY TALE TERMS

CHARACTERS

Prince (noun):

1. Handsome savior for distressed females
2. Heir to substantial estate
3. Strong owner of a white horse

The handsome prince saves the princess from a life of loneliness.

Princess (noun):

1. Brunt of mistreatment who is naturally beautiful with fair skin and a petite figure
2. Rescuee of the aforementioned handsome prince who is desperate to be married

The handsome prince married the poor girl, making her a beautiful princess.

Father (noun):

1. Widower but likely remarried
2. Trigger to a considerable sacrifice made on the part of his daughter

The girl's father is unable to protect her from his new wife.

Mother (noun):

1. Angel because of a tragic death
2. Protector of mistreated daughter

The girl's mother was so kind and sweet natured.

Step-Mother (noun):

1. Money-hungry, evil new wife to the father
2. One who mistreats her step-daughter because of jealousy

The evil step-mother makes the girl wear rags and clean the floor.

Step-Sister (noun):

1. Evil daughter of the father's new wife who is just as jealous and evil as her mother
2. Ugly rival of beautiful girl
3. Desperately wants to marry the prince

The evil step-sister pretended that the glass slipper fit her foot so that the handsome prince would want to marry her.

Evil Supernatural (noun):

1. Element with ability to place curses
2. Evil factor that usually has motives of revenge or jealousy

The evil supernatural element places a curse on the man to turn him into a beast.

Fairy Godmother (noun):

1. Watchful eye over the girl; protector of her best interest
2. Can be the spirit of the dead mother

The fairy godmother turned a pumpkin into a carriage to take the girl to the ball.

The Truth about Fairy Tales

Inspired by Mekeel McBride

1.

Of everything that I loved about being a child
Pretend play was my favorite. Of course, at the top
Of the world-of-pretend are fairy tales.

When we were little

The role of Cinderella went to my little sister,

The prettiest of the friends.

Belle went to the friend who liked to read.

Snow White went to the caretaker of the group

And Sleeping Beauty went to the friend

Who didn't want to admit it, but really needed a nap.

2.

I guess I forgot to mention my role. I was the servant
That the princesses acquired with their admission to
Royalty. My specialty was grass spaghetti with mud meatballs.

They reveled in their royal stature,

Marked by Burger King crowns. And I reveled

In the legitimate excuse to play in the mud.

3.

Fairy Tales can still propel adults back to their childhood.

On a particularly bad day when you spill your coffee all over,

Get a bad grade, step in a puddle and get a parking ticket,

A little happily ever after can do the soul some good.

4.

Like I said, the realm of fantasy is a crucial facet of
Childhood. And it's even important to return back to that
As an adult – occasionally.

5.

The truth about fairy tales is that they're not real.

They're charming stories about fictional characters

And magical elements. The truth about fairy tales is that

The themes can not be internalized as an adult.

The truth about fairy tales is that happily ever after

Is possible. It takes work, not the wave of a wand.

COSMOPOLITAN MAGAZINE

BACHELOR REVEALED

EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH EXECUTIVE PRODUCER OF ABC'S HIT SHOW, *THE BACHELOR*

THE SELECTION PROCESS:

How did you think of the concept for *The Bachelor*?

Well *Survivor* was really popular so we decided to try a reality show about love. We know that it's every girl's fantasy to be like a princess so we thought we'd make a modern day reality fairy tale. We start the show off by saying "Once upon a time there was a charming young bachelor searching for a woman of his dreams," and at the end of the show, he gives a ring to "one woman who cap-

tures his heart" (Camacho, Yep 338). *The Bachelor* [was] one of the top 25 shows in the Fall 2003 television lineup in the US (*AllYourTV* 2003) so obviously the idea was a good one.

How do you pick the bachelor?

We wanted to make sure that he's charismatic, good looking and wealthy – every woman's dream man. That way not only would the 25 contestants fall in love with him but the women watching at home

would, too.

How did you select the women to participate in the show?

Most importantly, they have to look good in the hot tub (Camacho, Yep 339). We like for them to be good looking and thin. Since we're trying to create a modern day fairy tale, it's only fitting that the women look like princesses.



Fantasy Dates

Include:

- ♥ Romantic get-aways with the bachelor (& sometimes other girls)
- ♥ Champagne
- ♥ Hot tubs & Jacuzzi's
- ♥ Fancy outfits & ball gowns
- ♥ Ability to win over the bachelor and receive a single red rose before the ceremony
- ♥ The feeling of being just like Cinderella & Prince Charming

USING THE CAMERA:

How is the camera used to your advantage?

We use "the camera focusing on the women's breasts, buttocks, and legs as they dresses, entered and left the pool, or disrobed to catch the bachelor's attention" (Camacho, Yep 339).

We also "created situations for the women to expose their bodies such as pajama parties, water rides in an amusement park, and interactions in hot tubs and pools. In a number of these shots, the women's faces were absent or de-

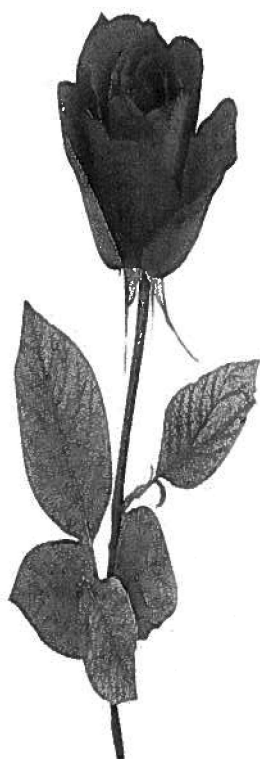
emphasized" (Camacho, Yep 339). By having the camera focus on those key areas of the woman's body, we can add a sexual element into the perception of the dating atmosphere.

BACHELOR REVEALED**EDITING PROCESS****What is the editing process?**

Because we have so much footage, we edit out a large portion of it. We try to include most of the important elements in terms of plot development. One thing that we can do is create a cause-

and-effect where there may really be none. We can show certain facial expressions or one-liners anywhere in the show, even if that's not where they were really intended in the original context. For example, when a girl comes home from a

date and is bragging about it to the other girls, we can edit in negative facial expressions from the other girls that may have been from another conversation all together. The important part is that it looks seamless when the editing is complete.



"Once upon a time there was a charming young bachelor searching for a woman of his dreams"

CUTTING PROCESS**How do you choose what is important enough to air?**

Good TV is all about drama. People don't want to see a bunch of people getting along with each other and falling in

love. Like I said before, we have a lot of footage so we usually include the material that is more interesting. We tried to "[highlight] 'cat fights' and open displays of rivalry among the women" (Camacho,

Yep 339). We also included a lot of the flirtatious or sexual elements because those are also interesting for the viewers.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**What kind of behavior is typical in the house of girls?**

Usually it's pretty uneventful. For the most part they all get along and have a kind of bond or connection because they're in this stressful situation together. There are ob-

viously some fights between them but it's certainly not as much as it seems when watching the show on television.

How can readers of Cosmo apply to be a contestant on the show?

If you want to be rescued by your Prince Charming, you can go to abc.com and either apply online or mail in an application. A picture must be attached and the questionnaire filled out honestly and then hopefully you'll live happily ever after!

**Parent who thinks Disney
Princesses are harmless:**

Disney Princesses
Are a staple of childhood

Regardless of what they think when
they're young, girls will eventually know
it's just a fantasy when
They grow out of it.

It's just a show.
Where people search for love.

They go on fantasy dates.

They are awarded red roses from him.

-- How romantic!

**Feminist who thinks Disney
Princesses are harmful:**

Disney Princesses

Perpetuate negative stereotypes of
women.

Girls think that they need to be rescued
by a man to be complete

They won't grow out of it.
Because it's not just shown when they're
young.

They think their Prince will come.
They want to live happily ever
after.

They want the glass slipper to fit.
Shows like *The Bachelor* modernize
these fantasies into reality.

But let me guess,
It's just a show.

Where women compete for the love of a
man in hopes of being rescued from the
misery and loneliness of singledom.

They wear fancy dresses.

It sounds like a dream come true..

Ha! How romantic..

And you're right, I'm sure they'll grow
out of it.

Just like you did.

Congratulations, Graduate!

This certificate entitles you to breast augmentation to make you perfect

To: My beautiful princess, for your graduation Number: 18302573021

Face lifts also available
for the poorly aging
twenty some-things.

Authorized by: Walt Disney Corporations

Not redeemable for cash. Must be used for artificial enhancements

Cosmetic Surgery Companies: here to serve girls who are barely legal

7 Layer Dip of Eternal Disappointment in Love

Ingredients:

- 1 Innocent young girl
- 2 Glass slippers
- 1 Beautiful ball gown
- 1 White horse
- 1 Handsome prince
- 3 Evil step-family members*
- 1 c. Pressure of marriage
- 2 c. Helplessness
- 2 Bunches of reality television

*Can be substituted with jealous girls of the same age as the innocent young girl

1. Spread innocent young girl thinly across the bottom of a rectangular baking dish.
2. In separate bowl, mix glass slippers, beautiful ball gown and white horse together until it looks magical and enchanting. Spread on top of innocent young girl.
3. Firmly press handsome prince on top of innocent young girl and magical elements.
4. Distribute the evil step-family members (or jealous girls) evenly over previous three layers. It doesn't matter whether they're family or peers – the important part is the female rivalry.
5. Dice up the pressure to be married so that it can be interspersed across the entire dish. Season it with the need to be rescued and layer it onto the dip.
6. Sprinkle the helplessness over the whole dish.
7. Add a dash of reality shows, such as *The Bachelor*, to taste.

Serve with high expectations and endless pressures. This dish is a crowd pleaser; I guarantee the baking dish that once held just the innocent young girl is sure to be empty by the end!