Exploring the Moral Space in Literacy Practices: A Fluid Model for the Actions of the Emotive Self in Adults’ Responses to Fairy Tales

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts
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Abstract

Bettelheim (1975) famously claimed that fairy tales support emotional health in children. He used psychoanalysis in his research, but a poststructural view of emotional, cognitive action allows for a new consideration of the self, as fluid and socioculturally situated. I use Taylor’s (1989) framework to examine the response of one adult reader to her favorite fairy tale. In noting the qualitative estimations associated with the participant’s orientations of self, I demonstrate a method for understanding the moral self as a cognitive act of self-optimization, using conceptual metaphor as evidence for these orientations (Lakoff, 1993). This novel approach to understanding the effect of fairy tales on the psyche has implications for the use of fairy tales in emotionally sensitive and supportive curricula, as well as for the general use of literature as a means of understanding, supporting, and expressing the self.
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Chapter 1
Background

Every scholar of fairy tale literature has at some point been compelled to supply an answer to the following question: How exactly do fairy tales speak to the psyche? This emotional connection between reader and text, when it happens, is never recognized as anything short of wonderful. At any instructional level, the literature teacher’s greatest wish is to foster this connection in students and reap the benefits of it through discussion, reflection, and inspired acts of writing. Countless educational researchers have measured and sought methods for increasing levels of student engagement with literature in the classroom. In fairy tales, we find a genre that is known for its ease in establishing this connection, its power even to shift readers’ perceptions of their selves and others in the process.

1.1 Context

Our enchantment with the fairy tale genre seems to imply already that these tales do indeed “speak” to us uniquely, on some less than fully conscious level. One has only to utter or agree with the phrase “…like something out of a fairy tale” to immediately position oneself as an enabler of the proposed magical qualities of this ever fashionable, historically celebrated genre. While some scholars of literature have dismissed fairy tale enchantment, maintaining that fairy tales do not possess any psychological element (Pullman, 2012; Warner, 2012), the vast majority of those engaged by the genre agree that it holds some unique power to engage with and affect readers in a way somehow different from other genres. Conjectures as to the source of this phenomenon range from psychoanalytic approaches (Bettelheim, 1975; Dieckmann, 1986; Miller, 1984) to hypotheses rooted firmly in both the sociocultural origins of the tales (Zipes, 2006; 2012) and their corresponding characteristics that seem to situate them perfectly to be shared, deemed highly relevant (Sperber & Wilson, 1986), and propagated time and again over many centuries.

Bettelheim’s seminal work at the University of Chicago in the 1970s rapidly popularized fairy
tales within the fields of education and child psychology. By introducing the tales into a psychological setting (Bettelheim studied young children who had suffered severe emotional disturbance from within the department of education), he showed the power the tales held for helping readers “divin[e] life from the inside” (1975, p. 23). Because they were brimming with symbols that could appeal to the inner emotional states of children, these simple tales, he suggested, were perfectly structured for providing the signs onto which a child could project problematic emotions. As the fairy tale plot played out, Bettelheim suggested that the signs found in the literature could guide children through a process of emotional resolution as they either read the tale themselves or had it read to them by an adult. Bettelheim’s chosen method of understanding the effect the tales had on the psyche was based on Freud’s tripartite understanding of the human mind. Both Freud, and Bettelheim in practicing Freud’s techniques, proposed that the essence of psychoanalysis was the acquisition of knowledge of one’s own memories. In short, psychoanalysis is embodied in the process of coming to an understanding of why certain memories have resulted in inner turmoil. To know one’s mind, according to Freud and to Bettelheim, is to know one’s memories. Such was the path to the integrated self, originally paved by Freud and subsequently traveled by Bettelheim (Hutton, 1988).

More recently, Hohr (2000) explored the psychological aspects of fairy tales through an analysis solely of text, just as Bettelheim had. Hohr proposed a textual analysis of three versions of the tale Cinderella in order to demonstrate how each version emphasized a different point for aesthetic reflection during the reading experience. In examining only one tale in depth, and situating the three versions of it within their historical contexts, Hohr pointed out certain aspects of the content of the tales that might be found relevant by children (depending on the nature of their personal experiences and memories), and cited the simple structure of the tales as the mechanism that would render them easily accessible by a young population. Not unlike the work performed decades earlier by Bettelheim, Hohr’s investigations drove him to speculate as to the outcome of the relationship between reader and fiction, without considering what unique contributions the individual reader brings to the experience. Furthermore, a suggestion that certain material might be found relevant by some children and not others is meaningless, if not placed within the context of the personal memories and associations used as the background for such relevance to be determined (Sperber & Wilson, 1986). In subsequent sections of this paper, we will also see that the transactional nature of the meaning-making experience necessitates a
Consideration of the reader’s perspective in a reading experience, and how it might be changed, is often thought to be most appropriately researched in departments of applied psychology, rather than departments of literacy or education. Lee, Talwar, McCarthy, Ross, Evans and Arruda (2014) conducted one such project in OISE’s Department of Applied Psychology wherein children had classic fairy tales read to them by an adult. The content of the selected tales focused on the notion of telling the truth. Immediately after being read the tale, the children were placed in a situation that deliberately tempted them to lie. This is an extreme swing to the other end of the reader-text relationship. Lee et al. focused all efforts on the behavior exhibited by the child immediately after exposure to the tale, in order to determine whether a change in perspective had resulted. Analysis involved measurement of which children had lied, out of all participating children. The focus was on the decontextualized child. Previous exposure to the tales, past experiences with dishonesty, the clinical setting in which the study was carried out, the tendency to enjoy being read to, and other relevant contextual details during the reader-text transaction were unaddressed by the research team, and such background information may not have been appropriate to collect, given the project’s design. It is easy to see how departmental restrictions and traditional ways of carrying out studies within one given field can severely inhibit multi-dimensional understanding in a project such as this. In one case, Hohr (2000) was unable to consider the mind of the child, and could only speculate as to the effect the literature might have in a meaning-making transaction. In the case of Lee et al. (2014), the dynamics of literary response were left untouched as the emphasis necessarily had to be on the behavior of the children being researched. The current project might be situated in the middle of the two ends described above, in considering the text to be as crucial to the act of making meaning as the reader herself is. In light of the studies mentioned above, Bettelheim’s work indeed seems to be the closest we have come to bridging psychology and education in the context of emotionally integrating, fairy tale based reader-response theories.

In structuring his theory of the psychological fairy tale within Freud’s framework, Bettelheim situated one mode of self-examination within the practice of literary response. As previously mentioned, self-examination in the manner described by Bettelheim (and the resulting integration of personality and optimization of mental functioning) appears dependent on an understanding of one’s memories. In this sense, Bettelheim’s method of self-examination in literacy practice with
fairy tales centered around the events of the past, to the extent that they had been perceived by the individual. Presumably, the more efficiently an individual was able to trace past events, the greater an understanding she would gain over her own mind, and thus the greater control she would have over her self (Hutton, 1988).

1.2 Problem

An exposure to classical literature, however, reveals that self-examination was far from being a new practice in the 1970s, nor could it (then or now) be so narrowly confined to only one precise technique. In fact, the practice of self-examination is first documented in the works of Plato. Foucault traced the lineage of the practice genealogically in his efforts to understand how humans have attempted the optimization of the self throughout history, and how the ever-shifting sociocultural milieu has pushed and pulled these practices into the forms we see today (Foucault, 1988). Foucault documents the evolution of self-examination practices beginning in classical antiquity, and in tracing the practices over time, reveals a number of characteristics of self-examination not considered by Bettelheim. When the body of practices is viewed from an externalized perspective such as Foucault’s, the historical evidence for self-examination techniques reveals Bettelheim’s theory to be, albeit of great value, a product of its sociohistorical context. Below, I will briefly trace Foucault’s (1988) history of the “technologies of the self” in order to bring to light the many aspects of self-examination not addressed in previous theories of the psychological fairy tale.

1.2.1 A History of Self-Examination

The practice of acquiring knowledge of the self is perhaps a natural human inclination. Dating as far back as the early Roman Empire, in the works of Plato, Foucault located evidence of efforts to understand the self through dialogue, writing, and reflecting upon lectures, readings, and daily activities. Foucault spoke of this hermeneutic effort as a form of technology, a “matrix of practical reason” (1988, p. 18) in which humans performed any number of actions with regard to their selves, in order to reach a state deemed by them to be the highest valued self they could possibly achieve. Even today, we may enter any bookstore to find an extensive “self help” section, and are not surprised at all when the latest piece of literature aimed at bettering the self hits the top of the New York Times Best Seller list. An understanding of the self for the purpose of optimization is a human effort that, since its inception, has not been put to rest. Furthermore, it
is an effort which has been (some would insist entirely) shaped by the social, cultural, and historical tools available to us, in the form of teachers, religions, laws, and literature, to name just a few influences. Bettelheim’s (1975) work with fairy tales was an exemplum of modern, secular efforts to understand and form the integrated, optimized self through the internalization of literature. His approach to the psychological reading of fairy tale literature constituted a privatized, individual mode of understanding the self, and of making one’s way to a higher level of maturity.

In contrast, through his history of the development of a hermeneutics of self arising from pagan and early Christian practices, Foucault (1988) outlines a path that modes of self-examination have taken throughout history which is not as privatized as Bettelheim’s theory suggests (Heisig, 1977). In fact, in identifying the first clearly documented efforts of self-examination in Plato’s *Alcibiades I*, Foucault immediately situates the hermeneutics of self within a social setting, dependent on sociocultural context and occurring within a space of dialogue, externally imposed rules, and responses to everyday activities and obligations (including the literature to which humans were exposed). In particular, Foucault stresses the subjection of humankind to forms of dominance, such as religious obligations and laws, and cites early efforts to understand the self as volitional actions in response to such forms of domination. He thusly shows the technology of self to be inextricably linked to the technology of domination, and a wish to achieve the optimal self (in whatever manner this optimum positioning might have been contextually defined).

Foucault thusly depicts the early forms of self-examination from which our modern technologies of self have been born as volitional, socially situated efforts. In every case cited, Foucault identifies these efforts as ongoing actions made by humans within a space of many choices, all of which are socioculturally determined, and given their value in context.

### 1.3 Approach

Foucault’s (1988) history of the space in which the self is formed considers the social, the volitional, and even the emotional, active aspects of understanding the self. Bettelheim’s (1975) theory of the role of fairy tales in the development of self considers a sliver of the space within which the self is formed in adopting perception of personal memories as its focal point, but has not addressed the fluid social context within which the moral self willfully takes up a positioning in relation to what it considers to be “good,” as this state is socioculturally defined for each
individual. The current project therefore reexamines a technology of the self in response to fairy tale literature within a postmodern framework, in order to consider the self active, constantly emoting, optimally inclined, and socioculturally constructed. In light of this postmodern positioning, I have conducted an intrinsic case study of one fairy tale reader’s sense-making activity in response to her favorite fairy tale. I address the following questions:

1. How does the participant make sense of her experience reading fairy tales specifically with regard to their effect on her sense of self?
2. How is the understanding of emotional safety and stability expressed in discussions of the fairy tale, in such a way that is contextualized within the physical and sociocultural environment?

As the positioning of the postmodern self within a space of choices cannot be discussed without a consideration of the nature of this space, in my methods I have used Taylor’s (1989) framework for a modern moral topography. In order to gather linguistic evidence of the positioning of the self in a moral space, I have used Lakoff’s (1993) Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT), for the link it implies between language, cognition, and our interactions with our sociocultural and physical environments. Lakoff identified conceptual metaphor as linguistic evidence for those conceptual images accessed in thought to make sense of the world around us. His decision to designate the notion of metaphor as “conceptual” stems from the idea that metaphoric language is evidence of metaphoric thought, which employs certain concepts in making sense of the abstract via the familiar. The accessing of these concepts can be thought of as preceding the linguistic manifestation of the thought process, so Lakoff (1993) differentiates between the metaphor, which is conceptual in nature, and the metaphoric expression, which refers to the linguistic realization of thought.

In situating metaphor analysis (MA) of transcribed interview data within Taylor’s (1989) moral topography, I have taken a somewhat novel route in my efforts to understand how fairy tale readers make sense of their selves in literacy practice, aiming to keep in mind the social, volitional, and emotional aspects of sense-making efforts. I will begin my account of this project with a synopsis of Bettelheim’s (1975) understanding of self-examination in literacy practices with fairy tales, and the current status of the field for which Bettelheim’s work was seminal. I will follow this with a mapping of the history of humankind’s construction of a hermeneutics of the self to date, supported by Foucault’s (1988) understanding of a “technology” of the self, in
order to demonstrate the diametric opposition of Bettelheim’s Freudian consideration of mind and a socioculturally situated consideration such as Foucault’s (Hutton, 1988). Through my subsequent empirical study, I will then demonstrate a socioculturally situated examination of literacy practice with fairy tales which considers the social, volitional, and emotional aspects of two adult readers’ (both the participant’s and my own) efforts to make sense of the moral, emoting self in response to fairy tale literature.
Chapter 2
A Review of Literature

2

The current project constitutes a gradual narrowing of focus within three concentric circles of knowledge, namely, age-old practices of self-examination dating as far back as classical antiquity, the performance of self-examination specifically in the context of responses to literature, and most specifically, self-examination in literacy practices with fairy tales. Figure 1 shows a visual representation of this project’s positioning within the realm of self-examination. In examining the common center (i.e., the behavior of optimizing the self) among these three disciplines, I will utilize this concentric positioning within a multidisciplinary frame to show that the examination of the self in response to fairy tale literature constitutes a unique mode of self-examination, which may contribute to the general sense of enchantment gleaned from interacting with fairy tales.

Figure 1. The positioning of the project within the realm of self-examination.
Bettelheim (1975) sought to uncover the unique power of the fairy tale genre for streamlining mental development and functioning, and his work places a capstone atop centuries of techniques for self-empowerment through the acquisition of knowledge of one’s own mind. But it is only in revisiting the classical beginnings of these practices of self-examination, through the genealogical tracing performed by Foucault (1988), that we may fully understand the significance of Bettelheim’s work, and the necessity of considering along with Bettelheim’s theory the historical and political contexts out of which his work with fairy tales came to be.

The following reviewed literature will begin with an overview of Rosenblatt’s (1978) seminal work on transactional reader-response theory, as this background is necessary in order to position the concept of literary response as a transactional act of self-reflection. A general introduction to the art of self-examination throughout the ages will follow, so that we might begin at the earliest known instances of these practices. I will then provide the contextual details of Bettelheim’s work that will situate it within this collection of practices, and in mentioning a number of other practices of self-examination with fairy tales which have been suggested more recently, demonstrate that Bettelheim’s theory is one among many that have been socioculturally and historically formed. I will conclude by revealing contrast between Bettelheim’s Freud-based work and the socioculturally situated, Foucauldian project at hand, in which I aim to illuminate the greater space in which the works of Bettelheim and others are positioned.

2.1 The Transaction Between Reader Reality and Fairy Tale Reality

In order to fully understand why fairy tales have been adopted as therapeutic tools (Bettelheim, 1975; Dieckmann, 1986; Miller, 1984), one might begin by examining how the reader interacts with a text in the general sense. How might this transaction, in which the reader acts on the text just as much as the text acts on the reader, become emotionally integrative for the reader? How might it help her to “manage” emotions which have previously been overwhelming, perhaps too difficult to verbalize? In answering these questions and others, I will adopt an experiential stance towards the theory of literary response, and draw from Rosenblatt’s (1978) theory of transactional reading in order to lay the focus of this project on the reader’s process of engagement and involvement in composing her own meaning from a text.
2.2 Efferent and Aesthetic Reading

In simple terms, we might say that if the reading of a text somehow changes the reader’s perception of certain aspects of her own reality, then she must have taken some kind of active, personalized role in responding to the literature and creating meaning from it. Rosenblatt’s work focuses on this active, creative role of the reader in response to patterned, textual symbols on the page (i.e., the text itself), and it is her work which I will suggest serves as a basis for interactions with literature as a mode of self-examination.

According to Rosenblatt (1978), readers read in any combination of two possible ways which exist at opposite ends of a continuum, each of which I will define here briefly so that it may be understood in juxtaposition with the other. These two types are *efferent* and *aesthetic* reading. Efferent reading, Rosenblatt says, derives its name from the present participial form of the Latin verb *efferre*, meaning “to carry out.” An efferent reading of a text results in just that – a “carrying out” of information from the text for later use. Note than any text may be read efferently, so long as the reader reads it in this way. Quite often, reading comprehension textbook questions (e.g., “What information do you learn about Ted’s family from this story?”) as much as guarantee an efferent reading as they set the reader up, first and foremost, to scan for the requested information. In an efferent reading, the auditory characteristics of words need not even be dealt with, as readers may immediately make associations between visual characteristics of words and meanings of them for quick, practical purposes (Rosenblatt, 1978). Efferent reading scavenges the textual surface of literature and serves the valuable, informative purpose of retaining important information for later use or contemplation, as anyone who has ever read a recipe for a chicken marinade or directions for assembling a lamp well knows.

Aesthetic reading, at the other end of the continuum, focuses not on what is to be carried out of the reading, but on the act of reading itself, specifically the feelings and associations stirred up within the reader in response to the text (Rosenblatt, 1978). In an aesthetic reading, personal memories, associations, and feelings are supplied for the construction of meaning in a manner guided by the text as stimulus. Unlike efferent reading, the auditory characteristics of words cannot be bypassed in an aesthetic reading, for even the very sound, metering, and rhyme of them may stir up certain attitudes in the reader. As with efferent reading, whether a text is read aesthetically or not depends entirely on the willful action of the reader, although certain texts and
situations will more readily orient the reader to take one stance over the other. If a reading of Hansel and Gretel is assigned during classroom literacy instruction and prefaced with comprehension questions such as, “Which two methods does Hansel use to try to find his way back home from the forest?” or “How do Hansel and Gretel escape from the witch?” a reader will likely orient herself efferently, knowing that she will be held responsible for knowing the answers to these questions after reading. If the same reader happens to flip open a favorite volume of fairy tales to Hansel and Gretel on a rainy Sunday afternoon and curl up on the couch to read it, her stance will likely be aesthetic, as she means to patiently savor the experience of reading the story with no expectation of assignments to follow. Her aesthetic reading will allow her the space to construct meaning from her own associations, the selection of which will be guided by the textual symbols found on the page. In this transactional way, the aesthetic reader acts on the text in supplying her own material for making meaning, while the text in turn acts on the reader in guiding her to make the most relevant selections of personal material.

2.2.1 The Fusion of Thought and Feeling

Since aesthetic reading requires both a continual awareness of text as well as the ongoing selection of personal associations, it is an experience which “fuses the cognitive and the emotive, or perhaps more accurately, apprehends them as facets of the same lived-through experience” (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 46). Rosenblatt (1983) has long suggested that literature may provide ideal linkage between thought, feeling, and even behavior. She suggests in essence that aesthetic reading permits us to think and feel at the same time, and in doing so, achieve a what she termed a functioning rationality of mind. The aesthetic stance towards a text is remarkably constructive in that it asks the reader to simultaneously “pay attention to all of the elements activated within him by the text” (Rosenblatt, 1978, p. 46), thus allowing a fusion of the cognitive and the emotive. In certain cases, this fusion can even facilitate a narration of personal memories, stripping away elements of self-doubt, denial, and fear and leaving only a recollection of events and a new corresponding emotion, now affirmed from an ethical standpoint by the morality of the fairy tale (Jolles, 1972). Under the force of the interaction with the fairy tale, the personal reality of the reader may be “transmuted” in any number of ways. As Rosenblatt (1978) puts it, “In the reading relationship, the reader brings his sense of something called reality, to which words point; this may become transmuted into something ‘rich and strange’ under the magnetism
of the patterned words of the text” (p. 34). As we will see, the “magnetism” of fairy tales is extraordinarily strong.

2.2.2 The Dual Stream of Response

As the aesthetic reader supplies her own personal associations (consciously selected or not) in response to the pattern of symbols on the page, she becomes active and creative in a meaning-making reading experience which results in what Rosenblatt calls “the evocation of a work of art” (1978, p. 27). The evoked work of art (or “poem” as Rosenblatt famously termed it) arises as a direct result of the reader’s continued stream of associations due to a heightened, continued awareness of text, and is therefore the unique creation of the reader herself. As the poem unfolds, it becomes a focal point of the reader, who engages in what Rosenblatt calls “aesthetic contemplation” or “what the perceiver makes of his [or her] own responses to the artistic stimulus” (1978, p. 31).

An aesthetic reading is therefore an active transaction between reader and text, resulting in two streams of response, the first in response to the text as stimuli, and the second in contemplative response to that which the text has evoked for the reader, in a sense, a meditation on one’s own creation of meaning. This dual stream of response is precisely what necessitates self-reflection in the reader. Rosenblatt writes that “[e]ven as we are generating a work of art, we are reacting to it” (1978, p. 48). When literature stirs something in us, when we feel that we have deeply understood it by virtue of the knowledge we have brought to the table in our interaction with it, we actually develop another, secondary response to that meaning which is often, but not always, subconscious. Rosenblatt (1978) elaborates:

This dual stream of responses may not always be apprehended as separate. The reaction to the emerging work may be felt merely as a general state of mind, an ambiance of acceptance, approval, incredulity. Such responses may be momentary, peripheral, almost woven into the texture of what is felt to be the work itself. Or the reaction may at times take more conscious form. The range of potential responses and the gamut of degrees of intensity and articulateness are infinitely vast, since they depend not only on the character of the text but even more on the special character of the individual reader. (p. 49)
This secondary reaction to our own evoked response may be of any nature at all, as it is
dependent on the character of the individual, and is often perceived as simply the general sense
we are gaining from reading the piece of literature. In and of itself, we can say that the secondary
reaction is an act of self-reflection, as it has arisen in response to a work of art which could not
have come into being without the reader’s personal experiences and associations. In fact, the
work of art is literally composed of the reader’s personal experiences and associations, thus what
the reader responds to is, quite frankly, an expression of elements of her self.

How then does a response to our own feelings and associations constitute an act of emotional
integration? Of what nature must this response be, in order for integration to be supported, and
what makes fairy tales such an effective genre for this purpose? While Bettelheim likely did not
begin his study with these questions, his work certainly moves us towards an answer to them. In
fact, Bettelheim’s (1975) theory that non-verbalized emotions find much needed narrative
expression through fairy tale symbols could be fit neatly into the dual stream of response
described by Rosenblatt. One could describe those personal associations called forth in
Bettelheim’s readers as the building blocks of transactional meaning, and Rosenblatt’s concept
of the fusion of thoughts called forth during reading with feelings stirred up by text might
explain the power Bettelheim witnessed of fairy tales to make emotions manageable. Bettelheim
seemed to hint at this idea when he wrote that the “eternal aim of Art [was] to give expression to
the myths we need to live by and affirm life, both in tragedy and comedy” (1990, p. 36). I
interpret this to mean that the fairy tale, as an art form, engages common elements of our human
experience in textually guided expression, and due to the artistic influence of the text, changes a
reader’s perception of these experiences. Fairy tales seem to appeal directly, as Bettelheim
suggested, to those human experiences so common that we can easily find them in traditional
stories. Whether the content of the fairy tale is inspiring or horrifying, it can in either case be of
great relevance to the individual reader, and to society at large. It is this dialogic interplay
between assumption presented via fairy tale, and social context into which the fairy tale fits, that
can result in personal affirmation of the validity of narrating and resolving problematic emotions.

Before examining Bettelheim’s theory at length, it is important to note that self-examination in
literacy practice (in this case, in responding to fiction) is one among many historical practices of
self-examination, and is firmly situated in the sociocultural milieu out of which it arose. Factors
such as access to certain genres of literature, the passing of certain stories from one generation to
the next, and the reader’s notions of what constitutes a morally optimal self are all formed in the complex space in which the self-examination is taking place. In order to understand how such a method of self-examination as literary response can be positioned within the technologies of understanding the self, I will provide below a general introduction to Foucault’s (1988) genealogical tracing of practices of self-reflection and examination.

2.3 Historical Practices of Self-Examination

Throughout history, humans have engaged in a range of practices aimed at developing a deep, personally and politically beneficial understanding of the self: Socrates encouraged his fellow Greeks to “attend to” their selves and in doing so attend to the greater good of the country, Marcus Aurelius wrote letters to friends detailing his mundane, everyday activities and the feelings associated with each, showing care of the self to be closely linked with expressive writing (Pennebaker, 1990), and over the ages Christians have sought a purity of the soul by identifying and confessing those aspects of the self that do not confirm to demands of institutional authority (Foucault, 1988). A common thread among these techniques is our natural human dependence on communicative language as a tool for self-understanding, arguably the most powerful tool we possess for acquiring such understanding.

Foucault (1988) placed this effort to understand and, by doing so, “better” the self among humankind’s central technologies, identifying a matrix within which the actions associated with examining, evaluating and improving the self were acted out, along with three other major technologies, namely those of signs, production, and dominance. Foucault was clear that none of these four technologies could truly be said to function alone, and that in particular, the technologies of self and dominance seemed virtually inseparable. This inseparability is evidenced as early as classical antiquity by the crucial role of communication in self-examination in Plato’s dialogues, the letters of Marcus Aurelius and others, the confessions of priests, and the awareness of institutional law and external regulation through a process of reading, discussing, or even simple listening and subsequent contemplation of information about what constitutes the optimal self. Through these early examples, we can see that the matrix within which the self is defined and expressed is not only fluid and active, but socially constructed as well (Foucault, 1988).

Contemporary efforts to understand, nurture, and “better” the self are not hugely different from
those of antiquity. When we talk of creating a “new self,” perhaps as a resolution for the new year, we typically adopt the same practice as the Christians of late antiquity in verbalizing those aspects of our selves that do not meet with sociocultural approval, and act to “better” our current selves by renouncing those aspects. Our senses of self, then, seem even today to be defined by what external forms of regulation have allowed to be the “best” possible self. Clearly, Foucault’s technologies of self and dominance remain as intertwined as ever.

In any case, ancient or modern, attending to the self as a socioculturally oriented, ongoing activity can be seen as a desire for self-improvement, which gains its traction from raised levels of self-awareness. (This is to say that the desire to reach an optimal state of self must necessarily come from some inkling of an awareness of what constitutes that optimal self, and also some awareness of our current positioning in relation to this state.) In this sense, Freud’s tripartite model of the mind, and the integrating effect he proposed of closely examining one’s own memories, seems a natural product of a long history of efforts to examine, understand, and subsequently improve the self through an increased knowledge of it (Hutton, 1988). Freud’s psychoanalysis can be seen as yet another technique for empowering and improving the self, the existence of which technique has been guided and shaped by social, cultural, and historical context. As such, the technique offers us valuable evidence for the nature of technologies practiced to date in self-examination with fairy tale literature.

A psychoanalytic reading of literature is often suggested to those wishing to gain knowledge of the mind and its memories in order to streamline its functioning and maturation process, and this is precisely the method employed by Bettelheim (1975). The process of sorting through internal conflict rooted in one’s memories and externalizing them via projection onto symbols found in abundance in fairy tale literature was, as Bettelheim told it, private, occurring within the “confines” of the individual reader’s mind, and necessarily lacking a social element (Heisig, 1977). As Bettelheim described it, memory that proves problematic to the personality and difficult to verbalize actually does not need to have a social element to it, as it serves no social, interactive purpose (van der Kolk, 2014). Bettelheim (1975) suggested that such problematic, non-verbal memories were given the opportunity to take a conceptual, narrative form by means of the symbols found in fairy tales, and that this narrative expression acted as a guide for emotional resolution.
2.4 Applied Enchantment

It is at this point, with Bettelheim’s (1975) technique for self-examination in literacy practice, that the current project begins its journey. Having identified Bettelheim’s work as one technique for self-examination which has been formed and shaped within a sociocultural and historical milieu, by carrying out my own investigation of the emotionally integrating response to fairy tales I propose to illuminate the nature of a technology of self-examination that acknowledges the contextualized positioning of this practice. In a sense, my investigation is an effort to contribute to an understanding of the greater matrix within which Bettelheim’s theory is situated. Where Bettelheim used Freud’s work to suggest that a greater knowledge of one’s memories could empower the self, I have opted to use Foucault’s (1988) theory of the technologies of the self to suggest that sociocultural contexts are precisely what shapes that knowledge (Hutton, 1988). In outlining my chosen methods in the subsequent chapter, I will demonstrate that the focal point of this investigation is specifically the concrete, experiential aspects of our existence (Lakoff, 1993), and the role these aspects play in the act of self-improvement. At a later point in the project, we will also see concrete concepts accessed, selected, and reflected upon in Rosenblatt’s (1978) transactional manner. It is first necessary, however, to afford Bettelheim the respect he is due by viewing his work and life in detail. This will provide the necessary contextual background to the field of self-examination in literacy practice with fairy tales, and is the platform off of which the project at hand may take its leap into new territory.

2.4.1 Bettelheim’s Positionality

When conducting a poststructural investigation, the positionality of all those involved is an essential factor in the accurate deconstruction of those concepts we aim to understand. A socioculturally situated understanding of Bettelheim’s work must therefore begin with an understanding of his own positioning towards the work he carried out. Although there is much to be celebrated of Bettelheim’s theory, Bettelheim himself, as former director of the University of Chicago’s Orthogenic School, is not now universally treasured. He might even be called polarizing, as evidenced by those who spoke out vehemently against him after his suicide at the age of 86, and those who passionately defended him. In spite of his clear passion for helping the children in his care grow into independent adults, it would be misleading to ignore the fact that his methods have since come under harsh criticism. He was accused by some of striking
children, mistreating employees, and making insensitive decisions regarding patients and their families (Rosenfeld, 2000). I heavily criticize all violent behavior, but nevertheless find it essential to note that before arriving in Chicago, Bettelheim survived eleven months in Buchenwald and Dachau concentration camps. He was released in 1939 and immigrated to America, where five years later he was appointed director of the Orthogenic School at the University of Chicago.

Bettelheim was described by former students and employees as complex and easily given to bouts of rage, impulsive comments, and rash decisions (Rosenfeld, 2000). Notably, all of the behaviors described by his colleagues are characteristic of people suffering from the effects of psychological trauma (Courtois, 2004). To what degree Bettelheim himself suffered emotional trauma as a result of his incarceration is unclear, but the fact stands that concentration camps are places which undoubtedly inflict emotional trauma not only during incarceration, but long thereafter. Such destruction of the personality due to emotional trauma is often conceptualized as a disintegrated or fractured personality, a self in disconnected, disorderly pieces, in which many psychological barriers exist between memories and aspects of personality. These barriers arise in traumatized personalities out of necessity, in order to ensure successful coping with reality in spite of continually experiencing the effects of severe emotional overwhelm (Heisig, 1977).

Bearing this in mind, it makes sense that Bettelheim’s theory of how children internalize fairy tales depends heavily on the notion that the integrated personality is something children have not yet achieved, since Bettelheim’s most recent personal experience with problematic emotions stemmed from a traumatic period of his life. He himself had experienced, first-hand, the sensations of a disintegrated personality.

Freud was the first to propose a “talking cure” to treat the dissociative symptoms of trauma, suggesting that the verbalization of emotional conflict signified the ultimate healing of emotional wounds, so we can see why Freud’s model of the mind held such appeal for a man who had himself witnessed and likely experienced the effects of a personality lacking integration (van der Kolk, 2014). Furthermore, in his early writing about his experiences in Buchenwald and Dachau, Bettelheim noted that he witnessed fellow inmates developing “types of behavior which [were] characteristic of infancy or early youth” (Bettelheim, 1943, p. 418 as cited in Kidd, 2005) as a result of severe abuse, deprivation, and emotional stress. The notion of disintegration of the adult personality to infancy, when considered from the point of view of the trauma psychologist, gives
us an image for Bettelheim’s concept of the child’s mind. Bettelheim saw children as not yet integrated, in the same way that he saw his fellow Buchenwald and Dachau inmates as disintegrated. His theory of interpreting fairy tales, then, focuses entirely on the individual, and not social, act of personality integration as supported by reading fairy tales, and since this integration took place as a result of emotional expression by those who could not otherwise communicate their emotions to others, Bettelheim was adamant that this process was a private – not social – activity.

Despite the now evident limits of his theory, Bettelheim demonstrated a supremely forward-thinking position in basing his theory of emotional well-being on language and literature. In doing so, Bettelheim spanned the disciplines of psychoanalysis, literature, education, and anthropology and brought them together for the common purpose of shedding light on the human’s search for self-understanding. We would do well to remember that Bettelheim conducted his research from within the Department of Education at the University of Chicago, not the Department of Psychology, Psychiatry, or Psychoanalysis, and capitalized hugely on a university climate which fortunately, in that era, was receptive to departments sharing ideas and strengthening each other as a result (Szajnberg & Bettelheim, 1992). His pioneering efforts to bring many disciplines together at the intersection of language and emotional well-being simply cannot be overlooked by educators in all contexts, and went on to serve as the basis for an expansion of his ideas into a theory that could later be applied to a wider population, including adults. As Bettelheim himself must have known on some level, adults are certainly not immune to the personality regressions caused by overwhelming emotions.

2.4.2 Expanding the Applications of Enchantment

Bettelheim himself observed in “Individual and Mass Behavior in Extreme Situations” (1943, as cited in Kidd, 2005) that extreme deprivation appeared to result in the disintegration of personality, but overlooked his own positionality in neglecting to apply his ideas about personality integration to all personalities which might be in need of support. If fairy tales worked to integrate the personality of the child, might they not also work to reintegrate the personality of the adult with dissociative symptoms? Not only did Bettelheim (1975) leave adults out of his examinations, he went so far as to explicitly identify them as a population on whom the enchantment of fairy tales was lost. Had Bettelheim acknowledged the contextual influences
that drove the development of his theory, he might not have chosen to limit his work to children alone.

By asserting that the process of personality integration was necessarily private, Bettelheim also “overlook[ed] the social context whereby a story relocates an individual in the heroic ideals of a common past” (Heisig, 1977, p. 103). To consider the role of the historical context of fairy tales in the reader’s response opens up a number of channels which may reveal a far greater complexity inherent in the process of literary response. Although Bettelheim did not explore the significance of the historical origins or socio-historical propagation of fairy tales, folklorists and memeticists have since argued that the “enchantment” born from such origins is not dependent on our conscious, factual knowledge of history, but on patterns in the brain which make certain stories ideal for treasuring and imitating, to be later treasured and imitated again in a cyclical process (Dawkins, 1989; Zipes, 2006). If what memeticists have argued is true, factual awareness of the origins and history behind a tale is not necessary in order for it to have some emotionally integrating effect on the reader. These socio-historical elements of fairy tale dissemination over time may be key features of a literary response process which is uniquely exemplified in readers of this genre.

Additionally, Heisig (1977) takes issue with Bettelheim’s stance towards the “higher morality” found in fairy tales, and their ability to instruct readers in the ways of ethical behavior. Expansions of Bettelheim’s theory have suggested that the transactional theory of literary response (Rosenblatt, 1978) might serve as a basis for self-reflective thought in readers, and that the self-reflection inherent in the process of transacting with a piece of literature might achieve the integration of the personality through a process of affirmation of one’s moral principles, an affirmation which is permitted and supported by a number of key features unique to the fairy tale genre. Among these features is fairy tales’ treatment of morality through the depiction of characters’ social behavior.

### 2.5 Fairy Tale Morality

Bettelheim (1975) noted that the “polarities of character” found in fairy tales were instrumental in providing ethical models for young children, although he cited the binary nature of such polarities as what allowed the child to easily comprehend the difference between the two ends of
the moral spectrum. While he insisted that good and evil were highly polarized and separated in the fairy tale (and for this reason, constituted a morality which could be called unsullied and therefore “higher”), Heisig (1977) disagreed and cited many instances of ambiguous, shifting morality in fairy tale characters. Fairy tale characters, Heisig claimed, could not effectively model morality for readers if their own moral orientations were not uniform throughout the text.

I would urge both Bettelheim and Heisig to take their arguments a step further, into the realm of transactional theory, which proposes that meaning from a text is made from momentary transactions between reader and textual symbols (Rosenblatt, 1978). The key word here is *momentary*. When meaning is made in moments of interaction with a text, whether good and evil remain uniformly polarized throughout the entire story may be inconsequential. We may see readers interacting with symbols in a text to create relevant meaning which has its basis in a particular moment, but does not necessarily consider the overall plot trajectory. There is not necessarily an insistence from the reader that a character who begins the story as good finishes it the same way, or remains that way throughout. The often ambiguous morality noted by Heisig does not hinder our ability to make significant meaning from them. Furthermore, not every reader can be assumed to find every textual symbol throughout the fairy tale relevant. Certain symbols will of course elicit different degrees of personal relevance, based on the individual experiences of the reader (Sperber & Wilson, 1986). Heisig does not consider the transactional potential of each unit of meaning made within fairy tales and as a result, deems their treatment of morality useless for educational purposes. In fact, the examples of morality found in fairy tales may be called “higher” not because of uniform polarization, but because of the fairy tale’s treatment of its moral truths as universal and indisputable (Jolles, 1972).

2.5.1 Moral Valorization

Dutch scholar Jolles (1972) held the basic assumption about human beings (with regard to the fairy tale) that they are all of a moral disposition and through the sensual, natural world develop an understanding of morality based on that which gives them pleasure. Nature as it is perceived by the senses, Jolles proposed, is what informs humans of the different degrees of morality based on what produces discomfort, and what produces harmony. He explained that his concept of *naïve morality* must be called “instinctual” in human beings, that the judgment it speaks to is the purest ethical judgment of which we are capable, and
If we now determine our form [of the fairy tale] from this perspective, then we can say that a form is present in the fairy tale in which incidents (Geschehen) are or the course of things is ordered in such a way that it fully corresponds to the demands of naïve morality, in other words, to our absolute instinctual judgment of what is good and just. As such the fairy tale stands in sharpest contrast to what we in the world are accustomed to calling actual events. The course of things in reality corresponds extremely rarely to the demands of naïve morality, or it is mostly unjust. In opposition, the fairy tale confronts the world of “reality” because this world of reality is not the world which confers values on a general valid way of life. It is a world in which the incidents contradict the demands of naïve morality, a world which we naïvely experience as immoral. One can say here the preoccupation [of the fairy tale] has a double effect: on the one hand, the preoccupation grasps and holds on to the world negating it as a reality which does not suit the ethics of the events. On the other hand, the preoccupation affirms another world in which all the demands of naïve morality are fulfilled. (1958, as cited in Zipes, 2012, pp. 13-14)

Jolles showed the moral truth of the fairy tale to constitute a precise counter-world in its creation of a set of conceptual images which speak to us particularly in those difficult moments when it helps us to be shown a world in which our concept of what is “good” is affirmed. By the same token, as Jolles explains, the fairy tale world also affirms for us that whatever injustice we happen to be experiencing in the actual events of our lives, we are not wrong to consider it an injustice. We are, on the contrary, supported in this consideration. Through narrative, our own judgment of that which is fair is strengthened by the existence of the alternate fairy tale reality.

If in seeking art one seeks an alternate reality, fairy tales as a literary art form seem to offer the starkest contrast to actual events a reader can possibly find. With the driving force behind such a quest being harmony in a world in which the demands for naïve morality are not met, this force is remarkably strong, and even instinctual, as Jolles (1972) suggests. Furthermore, the fairy tale offers not simply an alternative to the world in which the demands of naïve morality are not being met, but the precisely constructed, perfected counter-world to that (Zipes, 2012). For someone who feels great pain due to the injustices experienced living amidst immorality, the reality presented in the fairy tale seems like a “dream come true.” The fairy tale appears to reveal some absolute, indisputable moral truth, where our human experiences and interactions may not. If we consider that the appeal of fairy tales as simple story structures is linked to their ability to
deliver what we are not seeing in our own realities, then it is very easy to see why a special, magical, healing quality has been bestowed upon them, and all the more so for those whose instinctual demands with regard to morality are far from being met. This holds true for any reader who experiences emotional pain as a result of some form of injustice, as it is these associations which determine the high relevance of the tale and constitute the building blocks of the meaning-making process. The moral message of fairy tales is in a sense valorized by the sensual, ethical needs of Homo sapiens. Heisig himself went on to make a claim similar to Jolles’ that “although these stories are unreal, they are not untrue” (1977, p.73). The absolute moral truth to which Heisig refers can easily be realized both by children and adults, and sets the stage for an expansion of Bettelheim’s technique for fairy tale-based self-examination.

Variations of the self-affirming fairy tale response are important to note because their existence is what situates Bettelheim’s theory as one method among many other contextually situated techniques. In addition, we see from scholars such as Jolles that among other variations of fairy tale response theory, we find techniques that do take into consideration the context surrounding these tales, and constitute a socially situated response.

2.6 Relevance: The Sociohistorical Perspective

Where Bettelheim preferred to orient his methods inwards towards attention to personal memory, foremost scholar of German folklore Zipes (2006) contributed to the discussion of the psychological fairy tale by orienting his research outwards, bringing to light cultural and historical “situatedness.” Zipes approached the question of the psychological effect of fairy tales from a different angle than Bettelheim did, and as a result has moved the field towards a multidimensional view of the fairy tale as a tool for the integration of emotions. Given his background in the history of German folklore, Zipes set out to determine, from what he called a sociohistorical perspective, how and why the individual reader deems the fairy tale highly relevant, with the notion that its high relevance to humans over a vast expanse of time might provide some clue as to how these tales are being processed psychologically. Below, I have summarized the concept of relevance, and how it applies to the psychological fairy tale (Sperber & Wilson, 1986). The more immediately relevance is determined, the higher its degree, thus from the transactional perspective the more meaningful this text has become while acting on a particular brain. Again, we can keep in mind Rosenblatt’s transactional theory in this process,
and understand that certain symbols in fairy tales that a reader finds highly relevant will be readily accessed in the act of transactional, poetic self-examination, and will affect with more emotional intensity the reflection upon the poem created.

Sperber and Wilson (1986) base their principle of relevance on the idea that “[h]uman cognitive processes…are geared to achieving the greatest possible cognitive effect for the smallest possible processing effort. To achieve this, the individual must focus his attention on what seems to him to be the most relevant information available” (Sperber & Wilson, 1986, p. 1). Sperber and Wilson deal with the theoretical concept of relevance in communication in terms of contexts and assumptions, which I will slightly redefine in order to apply the theory of relevance to the fairy tale, rather than to an utterance in conversation, although the same fundamental communicative mechanism is at work. Context, or that which is used to process new assumptions, “is a subset of the individual’s old assumptions” (Sperber & Wilson, 1986, p. 132) specifically and adequately selected to provide a background for new assumptions. New assumptions come from the fairy tale in the form of dialogic, often moral commentary and are deemed relevant or not based on the contextual environment of the reader, who arrives at the moment of literary transaction with her own assumptions constructed of personal experiences. Fairy tales typically offer the most striking commentary in the area of morality, and have the greatest appeal to our senses in the area of right versus wrong (Bettelheim, 1975; Zipes, 2012). To what degree the background assumptions of the reader deal with suffering due to injustice and immorality depends of course on the individual reader’s experiences, but given what we know about the content of fairy tales, the evidence suggests that the more one has struggled with moral dilemma, often at the heart of emotional discord (van der Kolk, 2014), the more relevant the fairy tale content will be.

Furthermore, Sperber and Wilson have stated two conditions which determine the degree of relevance of an assumption in a given context: first, the effects of the assumption on context must be large, and second, the effort required to process the new assumption must be small (1986, p. 125). Context itself, composed of old assumptions, must also be accessed, and here effort is again a negative factor (Sperber & Wilson, 1986, p. 142). If relevance is determined with minimal effort both in processing new assumptions, and in accessing old ones, then, for example, she who carries her troubles in the very forefront of her mind will quite readily access tangible feelings and associations as her contextual background for making meaning from a fairy tale that she has found personally relevant. If relatively little effort is also required to process the
new information presented in the fairy tale, an extremely high degree of relevance and psychological appeal is established, and the fairy tale finds itself a remarkably fertile environment for implantation (Dawkins, 1989). That fairy tales have continued to implant in fertile brains for so many centuries may simply be due to the fact that, from a social standpoint, they are perfectly constructed for high relevance in the human world (Zipes, 2006).

2.7 Memetics: The Socially Valorizing “DNA” of Fairy Tales

The theory of relevance, in this case dependent on fairy tales functioning as a genre in dialogue with its social context, suggests one contextualized method by which humans find the personal associations to which fairy tale texts point easily accessible, and thus deem the narratives within suitable for addressing our emotional needs. Their high relevance contributes to a widespread social valorization of the genre by facilitating their remarkably successful propagation over time, which rather than fading out with age only seems to grow more prolific.

Another contributor to the social valorization of fairy tales suggested by Zipes (2006) may be a factor more engrained in the “DNA” of the genre than is immediately obvious. That readers find fairy tales psychologically satisfying might be attributed to the fact that they constitute a model of narrative which simply “behaves” in a way that increases its future presence (Dawkins, 1989). In the following sections, I will provide an introduction to the meme as the unit of cultural replication which affirms the high status of the fairy tale genre. In order to then apply Dawkins’ definition of memes to fairy tales, I will describe some of the conditions required for successful memes, one of which entails a certain degree of relevance. It is the reader’s awareness of this dialogically affirmed high degree of relevance which valorizes the genre and thus allows the affirmation of emotional-cognitive fusions described earlier to take place (Rosenblatt, 1978).

Although contemporary popular culture has given the word a much lighter meaning, Dawkins (1989) originally defined a meme as simply “that which replicates.” Like the gene, a meme evolves because it is set to replicate and finds itself among conditions which permit replication, the only difference between memes and genes being that memes evolve through non-genetic means. Where genes are units of biological transmission, memes are units of replication that are entirely cultural in nature (Dawkins, 1989). Dawkins explains that the meme self-propagates
because it is a good idea, because it works, and because it is easily and naturally imitated and passed along from one brain to the next. Dawkins (1989) points out that

> examples of memes are tunes, ideas, catch-phrases, clothes fashions, ways of making pots or building arches. Just as genes propagate themselves in the gene pool by leaping from body to body via sperms or eggs, so memes propagate themselves in the meme pool by leaping from brain to brain via a process which, in the broad sense can be called imitation. If a scientist hears, or reads about, a good idea, he passes it on to his colleagues and students. He mentions it in his articles and lectures. If the idea catches on, it can be said to propagate itself, spreading from brain to brain…[M]emes should be regarded as living structures, not just metaphorically but technically. When you plant a fertile meme in my mind you literally parasitize my brain, turning it into a vehicle for the meme’s propagation in just the way that a virus may parasitize the genetic mechanism of a host cell. And this isn’t just a way of talking – the meme for, say, “belief in life after death” is actually realized physically, millions of times over, as a structure in the nervous systems of individual men the world over. (p. 192)

In the case of fairy tales, the meme propagates not as one verbatim, unchanged narrative form but as an idea, an “entity capable of being transmitted from one brain to another” (Dawkins, 1989, p. 196), the presentation of which is surely different from person to person and therefore is, by definition, not part of the meme. Dawkins gave this concept of personal manifestation of the meme the more specific name of “idea-meme” (1989, p. 196) and although he did not use fairy tales as his example here, he certainly could have. For fairy tales, it is the idea-meme which offers evidence of high survival value because of its continual re-making due to “great psychological appeal” (Dawkins, 1989, p.193).

It should also be noted that the propagation of memes, as with genes, is inherently imperfect. This is particularly relevant in the case of the fairy tale because we have seen it re-made and re-imagined so many times. The need for an alternate, artistic reality in which that which is good and fair is presented clearly seems to be more in demand than ever. Memetics offers a justification for the imperfection inherent in the process of propagation. For example, Konner (2010) proposes that
The meme has proved useful in understanding cultural stability and change; at least four theories of cultural evolution have been based on it or some equivalent. As with genes, the faithfulness of replication and its associated repair mechanisms can ensure stability over time. And also as with genes the replication process is imperfect and errors have a creative function, serving as grist for the mill of cultural change, much as mutations offer the genetic variation that natural selection acts upon. (p. 689)

Due to the inevitability of variations on the fairy tale meme, we end up with many celebrated mutations of fairy tales which can still be called part of the overall fairy tale memeplex. Recent novelizations of fairy tales by authors such as Robin McKinley and Philip Pullman, or the re-making and extensions of fairy tales in blockbuster films as with Disney’s most recent *Cinderella* or *Maleficent* films provide strong evidence for the ever-growing popularization of the fairy tale meme, more often than not altered to suit the needs of the current social reality. Still, even in their altered manifestations, the fairy tale meme is almost always immediately recognizable. Unlike the gene, the alteration of memes during transmission seems to be, rather than problematic, likely necessary for continued cultural transmission. Dawkins (1989) refers to this tendency toward alteration as the quality of low-fidelity, and lists it among the basic criterion for a successful meme. Whether we are reading an original text, watching a film or listening to a song from a movie soundtrack, the fairy tale meme is at once recognizable and as enchanting as ever.

The fairy tale genre receives a certain degree of sociocultural valorization as a result of its insistence on propagating, especially in altered forms. That we insist on replicating these memes, despite the necessity of major alteration to make them suitable and appealing, is even greater evidence of their high status as a genre. To go to the effort of changing them to suit current needs sends a message of their psychological utility and appeal, where the other option would be to simply forget them. Each time the fairy tale is replicated, the genre is reaffirmed as socially and culturally relevant, offering a message from, as Bakhtin (1981) would have called it, a distant, valorized temporal plane which acts in genuine dialogue with the plight of humankind. As a culture of readers, consciously or not, we are aware of the continually reaffirmed social relevance of the genre, which places its messages and associations on the raised plane of finished, untouchable, and perfected creation (Bakhtin, 1981).
In addition to copying-fidelity, Dawkins (1989) lists longevity and fecundity as two more criteria for the successful meme. Longevity refers to the lifetime of any one copy of the idea-meme (my own mental image of the story of *Sleeping Beauty*, for example), and is likely, in the grand scheme of things, to be as short-lived as I am. That it stays with me potentially throughout my entire lifetime gives me more opportunities to transmit it, thus the longevity factor contributes overall to the psychological influence of the meme, however not as strongly as does its fecundity. Fecundity refers to the popularity of the meme, how quickly it catches on, and to how many people (Dawkins, 1989). The question of what determines fecundity then naturally arises, and is just as much “Why do fairy tales continually implant themselves in brains?” as it is “Why do the brains of *Homo sapiens* remain fertile for fairy tale implantation?”

### 2.8 Summary

As we have seen, the relevance and propagation of fairy tales point to processes of social and cultural valorization of the genre. Rooted within this mode of valorization is the necessity of each individual continually finding the fairy tale relevant within contexts. After all, in order for memes to propagate, relevance to the individual must be determined over and over again, and give her the sense that what she reads is valid, important, and worth transacting with. The theories discussed above connect the fairy tale genre to the particular inclinations of the self in answering such questions as: What does the fairy tale reader find important? What does the fairy tale reader need in terms of self-affirmation? When we view them in this light, the socioculturally situated theories appear just as revealing of the nature of the self as Bettelheim’s psychoanalysis was. In order to gain a multidimensional picture of the emotionally integrating response to fairy tales, it is important to consider the process as socioculturally situated. An application of Foucault’s (1988) technology of self allows for recognition of the act of self-examination itself as having been shaped by cultural forces, and the subsequent knowledge of the self gained from the act as also shaped by what is available to us in our given multifaceted contexts.

In the application of Foucault’s theory to the phenomenon of the psychological response to fairy tales, the question arises: What tangible linguistic evidence can we find for a contextually shaped thought process in the act of making meaning from literature? The answer requires a fluid, postmodern view of the greater space in which the making of takes place, as well as units of
analysis that have been given their value in a subjective way. This is to say that these units of analysis must be assigned their value by the contexts from which they have been selected as relevant by the reader, and also by the reader’s contextually determined associations. It is the reader’s personal associations with the tools selected for making meaning that indicate to what degree the reader feels emotionally affected by the fairy tale, and in what way.

The following chapter contains an overview of the project design, including an introduction to Taylor’s (1989) modern topography, which I will use as a model for the contextually determined space in which the reader is permitted to make relevant selections and perform certain orientations of the self in the transactional meaning-making process. This model will allow me to examine the emotive behavior of both myself and my participant as contextually shaped. An introduction to Lakoff’s (1993) Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) will follow, in which I demonstrate that conceptual metaphor use is a reliable measure of the concepts accessed in thought, and thus offers linguistic evidence for the values associated with the language selected by the reader. In the results to follow, we will see that conceptual metaphor offers strong evidence to illuminate the nature of the emotive actions of both reader and interviewer, as we engage collaboratively in self-examination through literary response.
In outlining an appropriate design for this project, I found it helpful to begin by revisiting the question, “How do fairy tales affect the psyche?” I reminded myself that I sought to provide as multi-dimensional of an answer as I could from within the realm of literacy education, and that a documented meaning-making process would be my sole source of data. Bettelheim’s (1975) attempt at a response to the above question provided perhaps one dimension of what I have suggested is a multidimensional answer. The current project’s methodology, in order to contribute new information, must therefore employ a different design than Bettelheim’s. First, I began with the assumption that a reader who is affected at all by the fairy tale reading experience must engage with it aesthetically, in transaction with the text (Rosenblatt, 1978). This assumption drove me to narrow my participant pool to those who read fairy tales for pleasure (as opposed to doing so for school, or for the purpose of participating in a research project). Additionally, as I had decided to use the transactional meaning-making process as evidence for emotional activity in response to the fairy tale, I needed participants to offer the richest possible linguistic evidence for this transaction. I therefore chose to direct my participant search at adult readers, who I felt would likely provide elaborate responses for analysis, relative to what I expected young children (such as those in Bettelheim’s project) to provide. Lastly, given that an aesthetic, transactional reading experience takes its building blocks for meaning-making from a personalized, unique store of material, I was wary of any design which might invite comparison across participants. Each reader of a fairy tale will bring to it her own contextually formed personal assumptions, beliefs, memories, and feelings, and as a result I considered the in-depth, qualitative exploration of one particular reader’s meaning-making actions to be far more illuminating than any similarities or differences I might draw across a group of readers, particularly if my inquiry into their reading experiences was to be comparatively shallow in nature.
3.1 Participant and Context

In the following vignette, I have recreated the setting in which I recruited a participant and conducted this research:

It is a Tuesday morning in November, and courses for the fall term are well underway. The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education is crawling with students. As I scan the lobby for Hannah, my participant, I can barely find a place to stand without being in someone’s way. Finally, I spot her on one of the couches, chatting closely with a student whom I’d remembered well from our departmental orientation earlier in the term. This student was memorable to me because of her age, as she is significantly older than any other student in the program. Hannah, in true teacher form, is sitting close to her, animatedly suggesting a number of programs and resources she might use for assistance with the technical aspects of OISE coursework. I am not surprised at all to see that Hannah has not only made a friend while waiting for me in the lobby, but has established a friendly relationship with her in just a few minutes, and offered her support wherever she could. Hannah introduces me to her new friend, and gathers up her belongings as we begin to head towards our reserved OISE Library study room.

I know from a previous class with Hannah that it is in her nature to connect, to befriend, and to help enthusiastically. In fact, enthusiasm is one of Hannah’s defining characteristics, especially when literature is being discussed. Memories abound of her in class, quoting Emily Dickinson or Shakespeare with a smile on her face, the whole room enraptured by her knowledge and infectious energy. Hannah is a mother to five children, a wife, a doctoral student, and a teacher down to her very soul; she enunciates like one, moves her hands like one, and connects with an audience like one, no matter the context. She happens to be a teacher of literature at the undergraduate level, and I find myself slightly envious of her students. I wonder if they know how lucky they are.

Her propensity to connect and befriend is not at all abandoned in her professional life; in fact, it is the driving force behind her teaching philosophy. Hannah is (in my own words), in addition to a teacher of literature, a facilitator of relationships with literature. More than anything, she tells me, she wants her students to feel, when reading and discussing literature, as though they’ve been taken on a journey somewhere with Hannah as their guide. I know from personal
conversations with her that she happens to have her own special relationship with fairy tale literature, and was thrilled when she expressed an interest in being interviewed for my project.

We get settled in an isolated, windowless study room on the concourse level of the OISE library, and as I set up my recording device, Hannah and I chat casually about my application to the doctoral program, and the politics of doctoral admissions. Before turning the recording device on, we begin talking about my own motivation for interviewing her. I’m excited, I tell her, to uncover the nature of her love for the stories she’s going to tell me about today, because of where my own love for fairy tales came from. I share with her that I had previously been treated for symptoms of traumatic stress, and prior to treatment found myself unable to enjoy literature as I once had. Fairy tales were an odd exception.

When I share with Hannah that for two years I did not read, she reacts with shock. In Hannah, I find a kindred spirit in my treatment of literature as a form of communication, a self-affirming dialogue, not just between author and reader but between humanity as a whole and the moral, emotional needs of *Homo sapiens* (Bakhtin, 1981).

After sharing my own motivation and positionality with Hannah, the interview begins on a sentimental note, as Hannah recalls her first encounter with her favorite fairy tale, *Peter Pan*, which came to her in the form of a Little Golden Book. The book was among her very first possessions as a young girl growing up in Egypt.

The personal nature of our meeting set the tone for an interview rife with emoting, although Hannah and I are apt to emote when discussing any kind of literature. In the discussion of results to follow, I will represent the nature of emotive behavior during our interview by sharing the conceptual metaphoric systems accessed during our conversation. As the interviewee, Hannah first established the conceptual systems in her language use, and as interviewer, I picked up on these systems, not always consciously, and added to them in collaborative fashion. Note that all of Hannah’s language use serves as evidence for her meaning-making behavior, and seemingly tangential details nevertheless point to those associations accessed by Hannah, as she recalls the way *Peter Pan* as a text has acted on her, and continues to over the years (Rosenblatt, 1978). Her personal selection of the tale, and great number of personal memories in relation to it, already indicate the high relevance of the tale to her life (Sperber and Wilson, 1986), and her repeated returns to the story in many different forms throughout her life constitute an undeniable
interpellation (Frank, 2010) of Hannah by the story not just as text, but as meme (Dawkins, 1989).

The current project, which is set in the context described above, is an intrinsic case study of one adult reader (Johnson & Christensen, 2008), making sense of her favorite childhood fairy tale *Peter Pan*, as that sense was co-constructed with me, the researcher and fellow lover of fairy tale literature, during a one-on-one interview. The participant and I are both graduate students at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, and have self-identified as lovers of fairy tale literature since childhood. Hannah responded to my call for participants due to her longstanding love of fairy tales, and her interest in literature education research. Hannah’s excitement at participating in the study, as well as her vast amounts of experience building relationships with fiction (and instructing others in this art) changed the nature of our one-on-one interview into a collaborative construction of meaning, as our enthusiasms for the genre seemed to blend into and feed off of each other. Although this fact eliminated the possibility for an external point of view (which might have been gained, for example, from interviewing someone who had intense dislike for fairy tales), the beauty of the collaborative sense-making process between two aesthetic readers was well worth capturing, examining, and analyzing.

### 3.1.1 Positionality

Notably, both of our motivations for enjoying the genre were rooted in emotional states. Hannah found the genre evocative of a sense of safety and isolation, just as she had in childhood, while my interest sprang from the use of fairy tales in my experiences with traumatic stress. Both of us at the time of the interview were familiar with Bettelheim’s work and intrigued by his claims that the genre held the capacity to affect emotions positively. While our discussion of emotion during the interview was clearly influenced by our insider positioning in the study, the units of conceptual metaphor I have chosen to analyze nevertheless reveal emotive behavior which may have been below the conscious level, and as such, cannot be dismissed as having been swayed by prior knowledge of Bettelheim’s work.

1 Appendix A contains the fully transcribed interview.
3.2 A Narrative Approach to Emotion Work

Perhaps the most crucial question that arose during this project was how to determine linguistic evidence for emotional behavior in a personal response to literature. The notion of tracking the use of emotion words likely comes to mind immediately for many people, as does structuring an interview with questions specifically geared towards identifying feelings, and changes in feeling. But having adopted Nussbaum’s (2001) view of emotions as narratives, and placing this view within Vygotskian sociocultural theory such that emotions are seen as cognitive actions, I immediately saw the problem with treating emotion words as evidence for emotional states. To simply report a feeling of “sadness” in response to plot elements in a fairy tale tells us nothing about the cognitive action of “being sad” in its fluid, socioculturally influenced state. Furthermore, we gain a very flat picture of how this sadness corresponds to a participant’s sense of morality. The state we have come to understand as “sadness” points to an abstracted, generalized meaning that tells us nothing of why a particular element of a story might cause a repositioning of the moral self, a misalignment, for example, with the participant’s definition of “happiness.” To simply say that we are “sad” directs the search for meaning to an external, unmoving, decontextualized state that makes understanding across individuals near impossible, and avoids an expansion of the word that might allow us to see the emotion as a socioculturally situated narrative and a fluid action.

3.2.1 “Narrative Identifying”

For the purpose of seeing emotion in its moving, active state, I designed the interview with the fluid identity in mind. I adopted Frank’s view that readers identify themselves through narratives in a process he calls “narrative identifying” (2010, p. 49), in which Frank acknowledges that the identity of a reader never reaches a final state, and is constantly offered material with which readers might be able to identify throughout the meaning-making experience. Frank’s view of the formation of reader identity in response to story is very much in line with Rosenblatt’s (1978) transactional theory as it presumes a reciprocal process of engagement with narratives. Additionally, Frank addresses the idea that certain textual symbols will have greater relevance for some readers than for others. He uses Althusser’s (1971) term *interpellation* to refer to the way a text “call[s] on a person to acknowledge and act on a particular identity” (2010, p. 49). Readers who find certain textual symbols from a story highly relevant to their personal lives can
be said to have been *interpellated* by those aspects of story. In the current project, I will use the term interpellation to refer to the notion that different readers will feel compelled to use different pieces of a text in the process of narrative identifying. Note that interpellation can be closely tied to the notion of relevance (Sperber and Wilson, 1986), as a reader being interpellated by a narrative to any extent implies that some aspect of that narrative holds a relatively high degree of relevance for her.

### 3.3 Interview Design

So far, I have assumed that aesthetic readers engage in reciprocal transaction with fairy tale texts, and that the process of building meaning in such a transaction constitutes a fluid act of identifying, which will necessarily be different for each reader, depending on personal lives, backgrounds, and other contextual factors. In order to capture and analyze this act of identifying in response to a narrative, I interviewed my participant in person in a semi-structured manner. Conducting narrative inquiry in semi-structured interview format (rather than as a written response, for example) would allow me to exercise appropriate facilitation in a discussion of the meaning-making process. It was important that the participant be encouraged to speak about whichever parts of the story *interpellated* her, and that emotional behavior be given the space to perform, as opposed to the participant being prompted to select a typical emotion word of abstracted, fixed meaning. For example, I asked Hannah to tell me first about any personal connections she recalled with the story *Peter Pan*. This ultimately prompted a short, side narrative about a trip to see the movie version of the story, which indicated the growing sense of independence and courage Hannah felt in going to see a movie by herself for the first time. Had I simply asked Hannah how she felt after reading *Peter Pan* for the first time, such a connection, such a narrative revelation of Hannah’s personal meaning-making process, might never have had the space to emerge.

The forty-five-minute interview was necessarily semi-structured in this way, and any connections (including personal memories, feelings, and associations) were welcomed and given space to move and expand. Additionally, in acknowledging my role as co-constructor of meaning, I allowed my own enthusiasm for fairy tales to come through in response to Hannah’s comments. Rather than assuming a question-and-response structure, the interview became a discussion of meaning-making processes rooted in personal memory and experience. As I will
show in my analysis, Hannah and I ultimately accessed the same conceptual domains for meaning-making, and built meaning collaboratively in response to each other.

A mapping of emotive behavior in its active, moving state requires an interaction of theories that situate emotions not simply as words, but as cognitive actions manifesting linguistic evidence and gleaning their meaning and salience from sociocultural context. Before I can elaborate on my method of mapping emotive behavior, I will first situate the analysis process within such a framework.

### 3.4 Theoretical Framework for Analysis

With the aesthetic, transactional reading experience serving as the “playing field” for a reader’s emotive actions in response to a text, I have constructed a framework for this project consisting of a number of theories which allow me to situate emotions as cognitive actions (Vygotsky, 1978) occurring in a socioculturally defined moral space (Taylor, 1989), and also as fluid and shifting, rather than fixed, states enacted by the self. After data collection, I selected instances of conceptual metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980; Lakoff, 1993) for analysis, because conceptual metaphor theory adheres to the notion that units of conceptual metaphor offer linguistic, surface-level evidence for inner thought processes. Figure 2 shows the manner in which these theories engage with each other, with narrative identifying depicted as an action taking place during the transactional reading process. During the process of narrative identifying, it is understood that certain elements of the narrative will call out to the reader more strongly than others, thus I have placed the notion of interpellation within the frame of narrative identifying. Sociocultural theory allows me to consider emoting in the Nussbaum (2001) sense to be an action, which I have situated in a space of moral choices (Taylor, 1989). Instances of conceptual metaphor (Lakoff, 1993) then serve as linguistic evidence for these actions. It was these ongoing, shifting inner thought processes that I felt would help me construct the most accurate picture of what the meaning-making, emoting self does in the face of the fairy tale.

In constructing this fluid image of emotive behavior from metaphoric language, I sought to answer the question of how fairy tales affect the psyche from within the territory of reader-response theory. Unlike Bettelheim’s work, the approach I have used cannot be classified as psychoanalysis, as it is necessarily, firmly rooted in language. Below, I will elaborate on the
interactions of the theories I have chosen to work with, beginning with the definition of emotions I have adopted for this study.

![Transactional Theory Diagram](image)

**Figure 2. Transactional Theory as the “playing field” for multiple, interacting theories.**

### 3.4.1 Emotions as Actions

I use Nussbaum’s (2001) framework for understanding emotions as forms of evaluation, in terms of the degree to which certain “objects” (the people or events around which emotive behavior centers) might pertain to one’s life and goals. Orientations of the self towards these objects indicate not only the way in which we view the objects, but also the complex system of beliefs which cause us to view them in this way. In this sense, emotions can be seen as narrative in form, and far more complex in meaning than the simple emotion words we use to name them (such as happy, sad, afraid, disgusted, et cetera) would imply. In the current project, I will consider emotional behavior as described above, namely, as socioculturally influenced cognitive activity that offers linguistic evidence in the form of conceptual metaphor. A consideration of the
physiological effects of emotions, while outside the disciplinary territory of this paper, may nevertheless find in this project a useful companion.

In treating emotion as an act of cognition, I also treat it as an action of the self. The view of thought as cognitive action can be attributed to Vygotsky (1978), and from here on I will consider the concept of “emotion” as a particular mode of thought, and thus an action of orienting the self within a moral space (Taylor, 1989). A Vygotskian sociocultural approach to any human action requires a genetic analysis of mental functioning, i.e., a consideration of this functioning primarily in its moving, functioning state (Wertsch, 1991). As Vygotsky himself notes, “…it is only in movement that a body shows what it is” (Vygotsky, 1978, pp. 64-5). To examine simply the phenotypical manifestation of a phenomenon then, as we do when we consider simple emotion words of abstracted meaning, is an insufficient exploration, as it ignores the many transformations which do not present themselves phenotypically, and which in essence comprise the phenomenon itself (Vygotsky, 1978). It is in examining emotion as a socioculturally mediated human action that we may uncover the nature of emotion as a process (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985). Throughout this paper, I refer to this notion of “emotion as action” as the fluid, ongoing act of emoting, and will use this term in the present participial form as well as the adjectival form, emotive. The use of these terms is meant to distinguish these morally driven, active, moving states from the finished states implied by simple emotion words.

3.4.2 Actions in Moral Space

It is impossible to map the act of orienting the self without addressing the nature of the space which provides the opportunity for such orientation. What is more, the understanding that some moral value, some qualitative estimation, is designated for each possible positioning within this space is the crucial hinge on which the nature of our emoting selves swing, particularly with regard to our understanding of what constitutes the “highest” moral self. It is in relation to moral choice, then, that the self orients at all (Taylor, 1989). Here, I will elaborate on the characteristics of moral space as determined by each person within her sociocultural context, and the inseparable relationship between our notions of self and the act of taking a stance within a moral landscape (Taylor, 1989). As Nussbaum (2001) also notes, in defining emotions as acts of appraisal of our positioning with regard to external objects, we firmly link them to our own
senses of morality. Below, I will elaborate on how this morality is conveyed in terms of our positioning in moral space.

In his definition of the moral framework in which an individual orients herself, Taylor employs a simple orientational metaphor which will ease us into the idea of orienting within a moral space, namely that “To know who I am is a species of knowing where I stand” (1989, p. 27). Knowing where one “stands” in relation to a given social or cultural commitment or identification is akin to knowing what one holds in highest value, and by the same token, what one does not. The moral territory within which we are able to take such stances must therefore be considered according to an individual’s own socioculturally defined system of qualitative values. Taylor goes on to say that “living within such strongly qualified horizons is constitutive of human agency…[and] stepping outside these limits would be tantamount to stepping outside what we would recognize as integral, that is, undamaged human personhood” (1989, p. 27). The act of orienting the self in moral space, then, is based on the desire to achieve an integrated, most highly valued state of existence, to the extent that the nature of this state has been socioculturally informed. Taylor’s distinction between being positioned inside or outside of “a space of questions about strongly valued goods” (1989, p. 31) is an extension of the orientational metaphor FEELING IS PHYSICAL ORIENTATION, and indicative of our close human relationship with our spatial reality (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980).

Further, the conviction with which this positioning takes place is a determinant factor in the establishment not just of our beliefs and feelings with regard to a given set of values, but also in the continuous formation of our selves from an emotional perspective. The formation of the postmodern self is then a series of fluid, orientational actions within an ever-shifting space of moral choices. These orientations, when assigned value, are truly reflective of emotive behavior because they allow emotion to play out as a narrative, with processes of reasoning and projected outcomes in mind (Nussbaum, 2001). These fluid characteristics of emotive action cannot be determined from simple adjectives alone. Additionally, to examine these emotive actions as they take place offers some clue as to the mechanism for the shifting of emotions in response to literature. The question becomes not whether the reader has achieved an integrated personality after reading, but how the reader engages in the integration of each action towards an optimal self with the next action, and the next, and so on, and additionally, what values can be assigned to the concepts the reader has chosen to access in this process?
Having established emoting as cognitive action occurring in a space of moral choice, I can now elaborate on the linguistic evidence for this orientational action. Below, I will explain why instances of conceptual metaphor use by the participant and researcher serve as particularly strong linguistic evidence for the qualitative estimations associated with orientations of the self.

### 3.4.3 Evidence for Cognitive Actions: Conceptual Metaphor Theory

The sole source of evidence for cognitive activity in this project is metaphoric language. Metaphoric language, according to conceptual metaphor theorists, has *experiential* basis, or in other words, is rooted in the conceptual domains accessed in our physical and sensual experiences as human beings (Lakoff, 1993). Lakoff defined conceptual metaphor as a “cross-domain mapping in the conceptual system” and separated this from the notion of a metaphoric expression, which he defined as the “linguistic manifestation resulting from thought process” (1993, p. 203). As Vico mused in 1725, in order to understand the way language can be rooted in the senses, and why this rooting is evidence for inner thought processes, it helps to imagine the uncivilized human, thousands of years ago, witnessing a thunderstorm for the first time and attempting to make sense of this unfamiliar, spectacular display of power. These early attempts at forming meaningful language, Vico suggested, were necessarily poetic and metaphoric in nature, for all that can be used to make sense of a new thing, is that conceptual knowledge we already possess (Bergin and Fisch, 1984). For the uncivilized human, the senses and experiences of the human body would have been the most readily available, relevant and trustworthy source for meaning-making activity, since the civilized, abstracted language we use today had not yet developed.

In the case of those early humans, whom Vico called the “theological poets” (since they attributed human characteristics to nature and thus conceptualized thunder as a human-like deity, in this case Jupiter), the language used could only follow what first had been felt in the senses, and accessed conceptually. As these theological poets knew their own bodies and senses better than anything else, they attributed such human sense and passion to the world around them. Thunder thus became Jupiter, and the metaphoric expression of thunder as human served as direct linguistic evidence for an inner thought process, namely, the mappings across the conceptual domains of sensate human being and thunder (Lakoff, 1993). In this story of the very first poets, Vico first demonstrated centuries ago how poetic, metaphoric language preceded
what we now call “literal” language, and given its experiential basis, serves as surface level evidence for the nature of the concepts accessed in order to form connections for making meaning.

The work of Vico discussed above may seem a drastic return to language use in antiquity, but in fact Vico’s work is essential in rationalizing the treatment of conceptual metaphor as a window to thought processes. Reddy (1993) was the first to demonstrate the prevalence of metaphor in language, not as a figure of speech, or anything language-based at all, but as a non-verbal mapping across domains. Just as Vico’s theological poets first mapped concepts of human sense and passion onto the unfamiliar phenomenon of thunderstorms, so do all language users, in employing metaphoric language in communication, experience a non-verbal mapping across conceptual domains in order to make sense of the abstract and unfamiliar, by means of the concrete. This non-verbal, image-based mapping precedes verbal language, and therefore has its basis not in language but in mental domains (Lakoff, 1993).

3.5 Metaphor Analysis

So far, I have outlined a consideration of metaphor not as a figure of speech used to supplement “literal” language, but as an instance of accessing certain aspects of a conceptual domain to make sense of another. When thought of in this way, instances of metaphor in language prove not only to be prevalent, but essential to linguistic communication. The theory of conceptual metaphor asks that we look for evidence of metaphoric thought everywhere in our ordinary, everyday language. Consider the previous example of Vico’s theological poets, who accessed the sensate qualities of the human in making sense of the weather. As a result, they built connections across domains of concepts in assigning some kind of meaning to thunder, which previously had no meaning. The connections across two domains, namely humans and weather, preceded linguistic representation by first establishing meaning in the form of images. The metaphoric expression (for example, the assignment of the name “Jupiter” to the phenomenon) came as a result of such a “mapping” across two domains. This “cross-domain mapping” is at the heart of conceptual metaphor theory, and is also the process we use in civilized thought and language today.

For a more modern example, we can also consider the concept of time. We speak of looking back into the past, looking ahead to the future, and moving forward or on with life. Given these
examples, it becomes clear that we have conceptualized time as linear, moving forwards and backwards, essentially on a line (Lakoff, 1993). Before such metaphoric expression manifested, the conceptual domains of physical space and time must have been connected. Lakoff (1993) suggests this is because we typically walk forwards, facing front, and go about our days in this position. We associate the notion of moving about and getting things done over the course of a day with forward movement, and thus associate the concept of passing time with linear motion. The conceptual images of a line and of time are thusly mapped across two domains, resulting in an understanding of time which is metaphoric in nature, and metaphorically expressed. The example of time is a good one for demonstrating how prevalent conceptual metaphor is in everyday language. We might now think of conceptual metaphor as the main cognitive tool used for establishing and communicating understanding of the concepts we encounter throughout life, which has its basis in our everyday, physical experience as human beings.

3.6 Steps for Analysis

The above discussion is meant to demonstrate how extensive the process of coding instances of conceptual metaphor in interview data can be. After transcribing a forty-five-minute interview with my participant, I approached an inductive establishment of themes in the data by coding all of the instances of conceptual metaphor that I identified. With each instance of cross-domain mapping (for example, IDEAS ARE FOOD, as in “I consumed those books one after the other,” or UNDERSTANDING IS SEEING as in “I see your point,”) I created a new category, and continued to highlight all instances of this category in the same color for the remainder of the transcript.

After identifying eleven categories of conceptual domain mapping, it became clear that I would need to determine when a category was not significant or prevalent enough to include in analysis, or in other words, when to stop categorizing. As a former Classics scholar, I was well aware throughout my coding process that all Latinate and Greek diction possesses metaphoric function. For example, even the word fiction itself comes from the past participle of the Latin fingere, meaning “to form” or “to fashion”. The meaning of the word comes about through a conceptual mapping across the two images of forming some object out of tangible material, and creating a story with words, which we then conceptualize as having tangible, visible presence. In (the great number of) cases such as this, I recognized that for most language users, such metaphoric
functioning is not recognized at all. I therefore excluded all instances of metaphoric functioning which, similar to the fiction example given above, most likely were not functioning as a mapping across images, and therefore did not offer substantial evidence of inner thought processes.

With the categories that remained, I sought to identify those that were the most prevalent. I again revisited the question, “How to fairy tales affect the psyche?” and reminded myself that metaphoric language was my only source of evidence for cognitive action. The above question then became, “Which conceptual domain(s) is/are mapped onto the conceptual domain of reading the fairy tale?” or in other words, what concepts did my participant (and I) access in our meaning-making actions with the story Peter Pan? How do these concepts correspond to our emotionally motivated cognitive activity in meaning-making, and more importantly, to any shifts in emotional behavior during the meaning-making experience?

I determined which categories of conceptual metaphor were most prevalent by counting the instances of each. Individual instances of conceptual metaphor (phrases or sentences) were grouped into categories not by the words used, but by the conceptual images accessed. So, for example, “…that’s the journey I want to take [my students] on when I teach,” and “I can go and visit Neverland if you’re going to traumatize me” would both be grouped into the EVENTS ARE ACTIONS category, with the event being the meaning-making experience of reading the fairy tale, and the action being a type of movement, in this case, a journey. Note also that this journey has multiple aspects, all of which are included within the same conceptual domain. From the example above, we can see that the conceptualization of reading as a journey entails both the pathway of the journey, as well as its destination (Lakoff, 1993). In this manner, all instances of metaphor that fell within the same conceptual domain were grouped together. Each metaphoric expression that corresponded to a new image, whether it was a full sentence or just a phrase, was counted as one instance of cross-domain mapping.

By far, the conceptual system associated with travel, or movement in space from one bounded region to another (Lakoff, 1993), was the most prevalent mapping device used by both the participant and myself throughout the interview, with thirty-five instances of metaphoric expression, where the next most frequent and relevant category was the conceptual system associated with the acquisition of a desired outcome. The bullet points below indicate the total instances of metaphor identified in each category:
• EVENTS ARE ACTIONS IN SPACE (35 instances)
• ACHIEVING A DESIRED OUTCOME IS ACQUIRING A DESIRED OBJECT (6 instances)

The meaning-making experience as it is expressed in narrative inquiry could at this point in the analysis be characterized generally as a mapping of the ontology of travel onto the ontology of the fairy tale reading experience. Within this greater knowledge structure, I then identified a number of inferences connecting the two conceptual domains of the aesthetic reading event and the physical journey. The nature of these inferences, rooted in the experience of the human being in physical space, offered strong evidence to support a change in emotional state as a result of reading the fairy tale, and insight into its mechanism and motivation.
In this chapter, I will first address the conceptual domains accessed during the interview, and in particular, a number of aspects inferred by this system that offer linguistic evidence for emotive shifts. I will then address in light of those aspects the positioning of the emoting, moral self in response to the fairy tale, in efforts to contribute to the discussion on how fairy tales as a genre affect the psyche in a unique way. I will begin below by mapping the experience of reading (and reflecting on reading) the fairy tale as it was conceptualized by Hannah.

4.1 Mapping the Reading Experience

Lakoff (1993) differentiates between two interacting domains in metaphoric thought, namely the *source* and *target* domains. The *target domain* can be thought of as that concept which we “target” in our sense-making efforts, and is therefore the conceptual domain we seek to understand via metaphoric thought. In the example in the previous chapter of Vico’s theological poet, the target domain would have been thunder, or weather. The *source domain* is then the concept from which we select knowledge in order to make meaning. In other words, it is the source of material for our meaning-making activity (Lakoff, 1993, p. 205). Vico’s poet accessed the domain of the sensate human body as his source (Bergin & Fisch, 1984).

Conceptual domains are broad and entail many different aspects, as we saw in Vico’s example above. Any of the aspects within a domain might be accessed in an instance of metaphoric thought. My interview with Hannah revealed similarly broad target and source domains, which formed an overarching structure of knowledge that governed a number of substructures. As Hannah and I co-constructed meaning from the story of *Peter Pan*, and engaged in self-reflection by contemplating our own responses to the meaning we had made (Rosenblatt, 1978), we came to conceptualize the entire reading experience (an event), using Lakoff’s (1993) terminology, as an action in space. The conceptual domains of EVENT and ACTION IN SPACE are the broadest domains that can be identified from the metaphoric expressions in the data. The specific linguistic expressions we used pertain to a more specialized type of action in space, the journey. I
chose to label the domains using the broad terms above in order to demonstrate that the READING IS A JOURNEY metaphor is a submetaphor of this greater hierarchical structure, and therefore inherits its experiential basis, albeit indirectly, from a hierarchically higher mapping (Lakoff, 1993, p. 241). Figure 3 illustrates the broad structure of knowledge that governed our conceptualization of the reading process.

Figure 3. The broad structure of knowledge: Target and source domains.

4.2 The Event Structure Metaphor

By far, the most prevalent conceptual metaphor used throughout the interview was the READING IS TRAVEL metaphor. This metaphor in turn entailed a variety of aspects that also factored into the conceptualization of Hannah’s change in emotional state as influenced by the fairy tale. For example, the concept of travel entails (among other things) a departure point, a pathway, and a destination. All of these images were used in different ways to conceptualize the change of emotional state that Hannah experiences when reading her favorite fairy tale.

Lakoff (1993) identified a common conceptual metaphor which characterizes the concept of a journey as an event. He called it the *event structure metaphor*. We can find events conceptualized as actions in space in many instances of language use. The example of time from the previous chapter fits into this structure, as in, “the day is lagging,” or “today is moving along
at a snail’s pace.” Aspects of the event structure metaphor are common across the English language in any cases where events are conceptualized using notions of space, motion, and force. In exploring these aspects and their cognitive characterizations via metaphor, it becomes clear that the use of the concept “action in space,” in this particular event, serves as linguistic evidence for emotive shift in the meaning-making process. Lakoff’s (1993) general mapping of what the event structure metaphor implies is as follows:

- States are locations (bounded regions in space).
- Changes are movements (into or out of bounded regions).
- Causes are forces.
- Actions are self-propelled movements.
- Purposes are destinations.
- Means are paths (to destinations).
- Difficulties are impediments to motion. (p. 220)

The conceptual system accessed in our discussion of Peter Pan incorporates many of the aspects above with remarkable naturalness and precision. Below, I will represent the linguistic evidence for each of the aspects inferred during our interview by the EVENTS ARE ACTIONS IN SPACE metaphor, and discuss some additional concepts relevant to emotions which were otherwise folded into the greater knowledge system above.

4.2.1 Means are paths (to destinations).

Almost immediately, when I asked Hannah to tell me her reasons for loving Peter Pan, she conceptualized reading the literature as an experience of “going somewhere…a place you could travel to” (Interview, 2015). Whether or not this was influenced by the obvious plot element of traveling to Neverland was, in the beginning of our discussion, unclear, but the remainder of the interview nevertheless maintained a strict adherence to this characterization of reading as travel, and attracted a number of other aspects of the JOURNEY concept as we delved further into the topic. The first clear aspect within the broad structure Hannah accessed was the notion of the
path as the means by which the fairy tale reading experience, and its emotional effects, are obtained. The PATH AS MEANS aspect even extended beyond the reading experience, into Hannah’s life, evidencing those personal building blocks she was selecting in making the tale individually meaningful for her (Rosenblatt, 1978).

It is important to remember here that Hannah selected *Peter Pan* for discussion herself because she had loved and re-read this story many times since childhood. As a result, the path described is one she has often traveled before, and continues to travel regularly. Not only does she know the path quite well, she also knows the goal of taking this path, and is able to seek this goal in a purposeful and self-propelled manner. Below, Hannah characterizes the repeated reading experience throughout her lifetime in terms of an ongoing path, extending the READING IS A JOURNEY metaphor to the broader LIFE IS A JOURNEY metaphor:

> It’s kind of like this trajectory; you start something off when you’re a kid, and then when you think back on it, you think, how has it sort of progressed, as I’ve aged, as I’ve grown up with it, if you will, and moved forward with it. (Interview, 2015)

Note also that the concept of LIFE is an event, and therefore fits into the same knowledge structure shown in figure 3. Having traveled this path many times, and accessed the enjoyable reading experience repeatedly as a result, Hannah now envelopes this reading experience into the greater event of her personal life, and sees the story as having “progressed” alongside her through childhood and young adulthood.

Traveling to Neverland, for Hannah, has become a metaphor not only for reading *Peter Pan*, but in a more general sense, for allowing oneself to fully inhabit a transactional reading experience. In an extension of the READING IS A JOURNEY metaphor to her life as a doctoral student, a teacher of literature, and a wife and mother, Hannah notes that “…if I allow myself to go to Neverland, my writing is stronger, my performance as a teacher is stronger, my empathy with others is stronger” (Interview, 2015). Additionally, Hannah’s admission that a journey to Neverland is something she must “allow” herself to do indicates that it is a desirable journey. It is this repeated reference throughout the interview to the journey experienced while reading that seems to call out to Hannah with the greatest intensity. It is an interpellation that presents itself to Hannah with great clarity, and that cannot be ignored. In fact, if it is ignored, Hannah’s comment above implies that it can only be ignored in the process of being recognized (Frank, 2010).
Reading that takes her to another place prompts Hannah to select from among her personal associations and memories (Rosenblatt, 1978) with great ease, and as we explore the other aspects of this journey accessed by Hannah, we will get a sense of why this metaphor is so relevant for her.

The conceptualization of reading as a journey is not uncommon. Many people speak of “getting lost” in a good book, or being “taken away” to some place in their imaginations by a pleasurable reading experience. But in this project, I focused my analysis on the emotive behavior exhibited during one’s reflection upon reading experiences. As a result, it was not only the path aspect of the metaphor that was of interest to me, but also the destination, which is entailed by the path and is therefore part of the same conceptual domain. When Hannah arrives at her destination, she accesses additional concepts which provide answers to questions such as: What is the nature of this place? Why has she traveled here repeatedly, throughout her entire life so far? What is the draw of this “goal” of the reading experience? In answering these questions, I will touch upon the experientially based emotive activity of Hannah as a fairy tale reader.

Hannah offered extraordinarily rich information about the nature of the fairy tale destination not by explicitly describing it, but by contrasting it with what she (and many readers) term “the real world”. Hannah first demonstrates this in discussing the finishing of the story, which she characterizes as “…this sadness when it’s done, having to go back to the real world” (Interview, 2015). Hannah’s word choice here strongly indicates the emotions she associates with the fairy tale destination, and the place she has just come from. A return to “the real world” is associated with sadness, and is something one “has” to do, rather than something one “gets” to do, or simply “does.” We get the strong sense from her language that the conclusion of the reading experience, the closing of the book, necessitates a relinquishing of something valuable. We can see now that the destination of the journey is desirable and in fact a goal which Hannah seeks to attain of her own volition, as evidenced by her willful return to the tale repeatedly throughout her childhood and adult life. The fairy tale destination is contrasted with “sadness” at which point Hannah accesses another aspect of the READING IS A JOURNEY metaphor, namely that emotional states are locations. Below, I will elaborate on this aspect in order to fill out our conceptual image of the fairy tale as a journey. To our path, we can now add a region from which one starts, and another region at which one arrives.
4.2.2 (Emotional) states are (bounded) locations.

The conceptualization of emotions via metaphor is quite common, and possibly even expected, among language users. Emotions are not tangible, therefore in moments of emotional overwhelm, we often speak of “blowing one’s top” or “melting into the floor” in order to make our meaning better understood. The READING AS JOURNEY structure remarkably fits this conceptual tendency into its structure by inviting the characterization of emotional states as locations. In short, if reading the fairy tale makes us feel happy, and reading is a path, then the destination at the end of that path is certainly the feeling of happiness. Hannah (Interview, 2015) characterizes beginning and end locations as emotional states beautifully when she comments

> I think there is this sadness associated with fairy tales, when you close them, and it’s not just about closing a tale and having to move on, but for me I think that if it’s a really great story, I’ve really visited this place.

The closing of the book facilitates, as Hannah puts it, a need “to move on,” and in this case we can assume that the destination of such a move is “the real world,” that place to which we must return from the fantasy we inhabit only while reading. The sadness, Hannah notes, is emphasized in contrast to what is felt while inhabiting the space of the fairy tale. Hannah’s words above also imply a directionality of the “linear” reading experience, namely that one starts from a particular, less than pleasant location, and arrives (by means of reading) at a location that feels much better. These departure and destination locations are further evidenced by Hannah (Interview, 2015) in the following comment:

> I didn’t come from a place of deep hurt but even extreme complacency or boredom can also be depressing. And sadness as well, like if we need escape for instance, if we need to reimagine, I think that those two mediums can bring us to fairy tale, and bring us to getting something out of it.

As I had begun our interview by commenting to Hannah that fairy tales are commonly used in counseling after trauma, she appropriately supplied the words “deep hurt” to characterize the state of emotional torment experienced as a result of trauma, and conceptualized this state as a physical region in space. Immediately after that, Hannah conceptualized other emotional states as locations, as starting points of a journey, and went on to discuss her own starting points similarly.
in terms of emotion. In her case, “boredom” and “sadness” were the unpleasant states that served as departure points for the fairy tale as journey. Figure 4 shows emotional states conceptualized as locations within the READING AS JOURNEY metaphor.

![Diagram](image-url)

*Figure 4. Emotional states as locations in the READING AS JOURNEY metaphor.*

Note also that Hannah speaks of “getting something out of” the fairy tale upon arriving at her destination. This evidences yet another aspect of the READING AS JOURNEY metaphor, namely that the departure and destination states implied are in fact bounded regions, or containers, into which a reader must enter, and out of which she must later exit. Hannah accesses the LOCATIONS ARE CONTAINERS concept many times throughout the interview, when she speaks of the “capacity” of Neverland to affect her emotive behavior, and also when she contrasts the fairy tale genre with the realistic fiction genre. Hannah notes that she finds realistic fiction, which she must read for her dissertation, “difficult to get into” compared to the fairy tale. The fairy tale, in contrast, possesses a great capacity for containing the characteristics of pleasant emotional states. Hannah not only “enters” the fairy tale location gladly, voluntarily, and with ease, but can even reach into and “get something out of” it, something that she has taken with her and carried throughout her entire life since her first encounter with the story. The knowledge that reading *Peter Pan* can offer her a shift in emotive behavior remains with Hannah at all times, allowing her to consider this shift one of the purposes of reading the story again, even though she has read it many times before. A change as one emotes, true to the event structure metaphor, fits
into the conceptual image as that movement, from one bounded region into another. In moving from the “sadness” or “hurt” of the contemporary reality to the fairy tale reality, the aspect of movement along a path incorporates the CHANGES (FROM ONE STATE TO ANOTHER) ARE MOVEMENTS metaphor into the overall structural metaphor. With the path of the journey conceptualized as the means of enacting this change, we begin to get a picture of reading the fairy tale as Hannah’s tool for emotive shift, as evidenced by the conceptual domains she accesses in metaphoric language.

4.2.3 Purposeful actions are self-propelled movements.

One of the major differences between this project and a project such as Bettelheim’s is that, rather than fairy tales being “administered” as a remedy for emotional discord, I instead selected a participant who had already acknowledged the role of fairy tales in affecting her on an emotional level, in order to contribute to the multidimensional image of the psychological fairy tale. It therefore must be discussed that Hannah’s reading of Peter Pan is purposeful, and volitional. Her knowledge of that emotional state she enters while reading, and its contrast with the emotional states she recalls experiencing outside of reading the fairy tale, make the achievement of that more pleasant emotive positioning something of a goal. This is evidenced very succinctly with Hannah’s use of the word “visit” in describing her reading as a journey. Visits are volitional, pleasant, and necessarily temporary (though we may wish they were permanent), and this is exactly how Hannah characterizes her reading experience. In one of her most powerful metaphoric expressions from the interview, Hannah states that “I can go and visit Neverland if you’re going to traumatize me” (Interview, 2015). The statement was hypothetical, and Hannah had used “traumatize” to refer to the inevitable, problematic emotional states we experience in our current realities. With this simple but strong statement, Hannah declares the fairy tale reality, that faraway region, untouchable by the current reality and accessed by opening a book, to be a safe haven for the senses. That which hurts, or saddens, or frightens, for Hannah, simply does not inhabit the fairy tale region. Her act of opening the book repeatedly over the years has been purposeful in achieving this comfortable and safe positioning, where her sense of morality is not offended, but affirmed (Jolles, 1972). In fact, at this point in her life, Hannah now openly recognizes that reading Peter Pan is for her a tool for achieving this emotive shift. This is also evidenced by her frequent use of the word “escape” in conceptualizing reading as a journey.
We only wish to escape from those things that pain us. The contrast between the inevitable injustices of contemporary reality and the satisfaction of our senses of goodness in the fairy tale reality provides strong evidence for the motivation behind Hannah’s fascination with the genre.

4.2.4 Achieving a purpose is getting something to eat.

One notable concept that does not fit into the event structure metaphor, but that conceptualizes the achievement of a goal via a particular source domain, is the concept of IDEAS AS FOOD, and as a subsystem of this, GOODNESS AS SWEETNESS. When Hannah spoke of “getting something out of” the fairy tale, she employed the object subsystem of the PURPOSES ARE DESTINATIONS metaphor. Achieving a purpose is commonly conceptualized as the attainment of a physical object. This, as Lakoff (1993) tells us, has an experiential basis, for when we want to obtain something such as a pen, it is likely that we will need to get up and move physically toward wherever the pen is. Getting up and walking over to my desk allows me to obtain the pen that I need. From this natural experience, we conceptualize the attainment of a goal as the destination of some journey, and the taking up of some object there. Hannah employed the object subsystem in a nuanced way, incorporating the notions of goodness and badness into her conceptualization. She says, about her reading experience, that “it felt like eating, you know like some kind of chocolate delight in Neverland” and then extends the metaphor to include other literature that had the same effect on her, saying that in general “if the words are really well done, it’s like this sweetness…” (Interview, 2015). Pleasant tastes are perhaps among the most natural candidates for a conceptualization of goodness, as the way we experience them is intense and undeniably pleasant. In order to express that the arrival and stay in fairy tale reality was not only the attainment of a targeted emotive shift, but a shift to something that felt wonderful, Hannah conceptualized arriving in Neverland as getting some kind of sweet, delicious treat.

From this close examination of Hannah’s use of conceptual metaphor, we have created a moving, physical image of emoting, which has its basis in our sensual experiences in the world to represent what happens when she recalls her experiences reading Peter Pan. We see her move physically from a location in which hurt and sadness are very real possibilities, to a location where a familiar and very rewarding goal awaits, namely the feeling of comfort and safety that heavily contrasts the feelings associated with everyday reality.
We might, at first glance, consider this information obvious. After all, Hannah already identifies as a lover of fairy tales, and readers of many other narrative-based genres conceptualize their experiences similarly, with fiction as an “escape” of some kind. What does the above mapping of conceptual domains tell us that simple emotion words cannot? If Hannah had simply said, “I feel safer when I read fairy tales” (a statement which does not employ any of the event structure concepts), we would have missed a great deal of information. First, we would not have conceptualized the reading experience as an image of two destinations that remain completely separate from each other. Part of the appeal of the fairy tale reality is that the current reality cannot penetrate it in any way. To inhabit fairy tale reality is to be completely contained in a realm that has a different space of moral choices in which the reader can position her self (Jolles, 1972; Taylor, 1989). Abstracted language does not convey the boundaries between realities, or the great distance that must be traversed to get from one to the other. As Bakhtin (1981) said of the epic genre, and it certainly applies here too, there is great comfort in the distance between realities, particularly when one reality satisfies our notions of what is good and just, while the other does not. Secondly, abstracted language provides no confirmation that the fairy tale reading experience is a willful achievement of a goal, a purposeful act in which the reader brings about an emotive shift as a direct rejection of an uncomfortable positioning in the contemporary reality’s moral topography.

Lakoff summarized the experiential basis of a self-propelled emotive shift beautifully and simply, writing “If you want to be in the sunshine, you have to move to where the sunshine is” (1993, p. 240). Below, I will examine Hannah’s movements “to where the sunshine is” using Taylor’s (1989) framework for the space of moral choices we inhabit, and how our movement in this space is crucial to our understanding of who we are and why we behave and feel in the ways that we do. In examining the space of moral choices present in the fairy tale genre, I will contribute to the discussion of why fairy tales possess a unique capacity to alter the emotions.

4.3 Movements in Space: Capacities of the Fairy Tale

In mapping Hannah’s transactional reading experience conceptually in terms of a volitional movement from one emotional state to another, we learn that Hannah bases her notions of morality – at least in part - on the senses (Jolles, 1972). We also know from her conceptual metaphor use that she is inclined to remedy the discomfort of inhabiting a reality which offends
her senses of right and wrong by shifting the nature of the moral space she inhabits. She does this, of course, by entering the world of the fairy tale.

4.3.1 The Moral Framework of Fairy Tales

As I mentioned in Chapter 2, the fairy tale is unique in its treatment of morality. These stories are showcases for blunt, indisputable treatments of morality (Zipes, 2012) and as such, offer a moral framework for readers in which goodness and badness are clearly indicated and rooted in the sense-based, human experience (Jolles, 1972). That which causes harm to another appears indisputably evil in the fairy tale, regardless of whether or not good triumphs in the end. (All scholars, though perhaps not all readers, of fairy tales are aware of the huge number of tales in which evil prevails, often violently.) Recall from Chapter 2 Jolles’ (1972) basic assumption about human beings with regard to their responses to fairy tale, that they are all of a “moral disposition” and through the natural world develop an understanding of morality based on what gives them pleasure, and what does not. The senses, Jolles explained, inform us of what separates just from unjust behavior, by making clear in an experientially based way what separates harmony from discord. Hannah’s conceptualization of negative emotions as a departure point fits in with Jolles’ sensually based morality. Having identified a positioning as negative and uncomfortable, Hannah responds by willfully moving to a new state, and a new morally framed space.

4.3.2 “Aspiration to Connection”

From Hannah’s language, we understand that she holds some notion of what constitutes “good” since she unfailingly finds it in one reality, yet not always in the other. In fact, her main motivation for visiting the alternative reality is the inability to find “good” in the contemporary one, as evidenced by the emotional states she cites as possible departure points. Thus we can conclude that Hannah, as a self in moral space, exists within a particular framework that clarifies for her what is good, just, and right, and what is not.

In his discussion of the connections between identity and moral space, and more specifically, the link between the sense of self and the sense of what it means to be “good”, Taylor (1989) comments first on the human need to exist within such a framework that makes clear the qualitative values associated with certain orientations of the self, and second, on our “aspiration
to connect” (1989, p. 42) with what we consider to be of highest value. What constitutes highest value will vary from person to person, and especially from culture to culture. Value originates in a way that is inseparable from sociocultural context. Additionally, those orientations deemed “best” typically correspond to those objects with the highest degree of salience in our emotional narratives (Nussbaum, 2001). In making these connections between the human need to “touch” the good, the defining of this good within a socioculturally constructed moral framework, and the dependence of the nature of our emotions on the values we associate with certain orientations in the framework, I have attempted to paint a picture of fluid emotive behavior as inseparable from the constantly orienting self in moral space. Given fairy tales’ unique treatment of morality, the orientations performed by Hannah during our interview are rich with evidence for what Hannah considers to be of highest value to her own life, in the moral sense.

4.3.3 Connecting with a Greater Reality

Taylor (1989) cites being able to “touch” the good as an aspiration that is nothing short of crucial to all humans. It is perhaps in the moral sense that this aspiration becomes most fervent. We see in examples of organized religion the strong tendency of humans to find that connection to a framework within some reality – or some story - greater than their own. Hannah’s sense-based framework for morality tells her that to feel safely isolated in the fairy tale reality is to be undoubtedly in touch with what is good. This comes up in particular when she discusses using books to escape the drama of childhood and adolescence, in which “kids can be mean” (Interview, 2015). At the same time, Hannah alludes to an affirmation of her self as a good teacher, gleaned from inhabiting fairy tale reality, saying: “if I allow myself to go to Neverland, my writing is stronger, my performance as a teacher is stronger, my empathy with others is stronger” (Interview, 2015). She goes on to express her desire to take her students with her to Neverland, to allow them to feel what she feels, and take all that she has taken from the experience.

In coming into contact with “goodness” by inhabiting the moral framework of the fairy tale, Hannah also reconciles a concern with her self as a graduate student. During our interview, she spoke of her recent difficulties with “get[ting] into” the realistic fiction she was meant to read for her dissertation, or the Victorian literature she had read (and once loved) for her master’s thesis. We went on to commiserate over the near impossibility of “losing oneself” in a scholarly journal
At this point, Hannah expressed very clearly the notion that reading *Peter Pan*, for her, is a way of “touching the good”, both in her professional and personal lives:

[I’ll be] looking at empirical data and realizing, okay I hate that stuff, so how can I combine…and then find ways to navigate what I do like? Now, when I read for pleasure, I don’t want to feel like I have to read something, so what is it that I like to read? I like to read fantasy, I like to read fairy, and just embracing that, this is the escape factor for me. (Interview, 2015)

In fully embracing her inhabitance of the fairy tale reality, Hannah has in fact assigned sense and meaning to the nature of her self in all of the moral frameworks she inhabits. In her professional life as a teacher, Hannah makes meaningful her self as a lover of fantasy (over other genres, which she might at one point have felt obligated to prefer) by connecting her teaching self to her reading self, saying

in my deepest desires, this is what I want to do. If I were to just shut everything out, I would love to just visit Neverland. And that’s what I want to do in the work that I do, that’s what I want to do when I stand up and be a teacher and teach my class, that’s the journey I want to take them on when I teach, so I’m like, let’s go to Neverland together! (Interview, 2015).

When she is obligated, as we all are, to eventually close the book and return to the current reality, it is this memory of having “touched” goodness within the fairy tale that Hannah carries with her. In “touching the good” during a reading experience, Hannah has made an immensely powerful connection with the moral framework of the fairy tale. Her time spent “in Neverland” gives sense and meaning to other spaces in her life, even if those spaces do not exist within the fairy tale framework. It is Hannah’s ability, while reading *Peter Pan*, to find her self in connection with moral goodness, and to affirm that her self is placed positively in relation to that goodness, which allows her love for fairy tale literature to occupy a highly valued, tremendously meaningful place in Hannah’s life.
4.4 Reflexivity and the Creation of Space for Empathy

As a qualitative researcher, it is essential that I consider reflexivity. I have placed this section towards the end of my discussion of results because, in truth, reflexivity was a concept with which I did not grapple until I had already carried out my analysis. As a new researcher, I did not yet have the concept in mind when I designed my interview questions, conducted the interview, or coded the data. A chapter written by Shah, however, intercepted my lack of awareness in pointing out that “[q]ualitative research data do not exist independently of the researcher” (2014, p. 49). Rather, Shah notes, it is generated in the interaction between researcher and participant. This notion is crucial to all forms of qualitative research, but is especially, directly applicable in the case of this project for a number of reasons. First, my positioning within the project, although fluid, is predominantly an insider positioning, with respect to the topic being discussed. Hannah and I already knew each other to be not only lovers of fairy tale literature, but also to be the sort of readers who readily lose themselves in books. An emotive change during the act of reading, although not mentioned explicitly until Hannah brought it up during the interview in the form of her READING IS A JOURNEY metaphor, was strongly implied very early on, in any case. We both knew that the other was apt to be deeply affected by literature.

The second reason for the crucial role of reflexivity in this project has to do with empathy. Due to my emotive positioning as an insider in my project, settled comfortably within the confines of a world of people who fall in love with books, the only valid form of data that can be taken from this interview is that which has been co-constructed inside of this particular population, and recognized as such. Were it not for the collaboration of Hannah and myself as both researchers and researched, both interviewers and interviewees, the data generated would not have been of the nature I have shown. Our co-constructed view of the emotive aspects of literary response is simply, as Wolcott puts it, “a way of seeing” (Wolcott, 1999, as cited in Shah, 2014, p. 47), rather than the only way. I might refer to my positioning in the study as “insider” but this insider positioning is entirely in relation to and dependent on the context in which the interview took place. Hannah and I came together as two graduate researchers, two colleagues, two lovers of literature who wish very much to bring others to the point of joy we both feel from reading. When this positioning is recognized, the data can then be considered valid in terms of what it is: a collaborative expression of the manner in which fairy tale lovers find solace through reading. The data cannot be considered generalizable, instructional, or applicable to any other contexts.
besides the unique one created by Hannah and myself, but nevertheless has value in its revelation of a technology of the reader relating to fairy tale.

4.4.1 Space for Empathy

This limit to the data’s validity, however, has one very striking implication which could not have been as extensively explored in a non-collaborative interview. Hannah and I engaged in numerous instances of building metaphor off of each other. As Hannah began to liberally access the concept of a journey in her comments, I began to do the same. In the following exchange (Interview, 2015), Hannah and I come (by way of collaborative metaphor) to a truly empathetic understanding of what has brought each of us to the fairy tale genre:

H: Let’s look at this possibility…what’s going on, what’s happening, what does it mean for us? How do you interpret it, what do you see in Neverland? Maybe you see, you know, a jealous fairy, maybe I see, you know, this Captain Hook…what do we see and how is that different, how does it allow for the possibility to imagine something and create something together that’s there, not even in the mind of the author, or the Disney book author, writer, composer, director, but in our own ability to see things that are there. So I think that fairy tale offers me that way to escape, a way to reimagine…and lots of times I don’t want to live in the world, you know what I mean?

E: Yeah, yeah. It’s the whole, like, “anything you want” thing, like literally anything you want, you can build that, and it’s funny that you mention not coming from a place of deep hurt with it, because I think it’s actually the same coming from a place of deep hurt, because this realm of possibility is huge, because you’re like, it doesn’t have to be this way, I don’t have to feel like this, I can go there and feel like this.

H: Yes, yes. And even the fact that, you know, I didn’t come from a place of deep hurt but even extreme complacency or boredom can also be depressing. And sadness as well, like if we need escape for instance, if we need to reimagine, I think that those two mediums can bring us to fairy tale, and bring us to getting something out of it.

Note that after Hannah alluded to the many different possibilities for personal interpretation of the fairy tale, I adopted this same language, and promptly applied it to the concept of the fairy tale as a destination. I even specified the size of the space, namely that it was “huge” to indicate
just how many movements a person could make in this space. I then commented on Hannah’s previous mention of “deep hurt” as a departure point, and in doing so, constructed the same READING AS JOURNEY metaphor as Hannah had. Hannah then built on my comments by suggesting two other emotional states as possible departure points for the journey.

At this point in the interview, as evidenced by our enthusiastic agreeing with each other, Hannah and I came to a truly empathetic understanding of that particular emotive positioning of the other that brought her to the fairy tale. We learned not simply that we both read as a means of escape; we learned in particular that the discomfort of certain emotions, rooted in a dissatisfaction in moral space, drives each of us to the fairy tale, precisely because we both already know what that fairy tale will do. We know from the deconstruction of the journey metaphor earlier in this chapter that the emotive shift we both seek is purposeful, and is also dependent on a distance between two realities, both of which constitute different moral spaces, and which do not touch or overlap with each other.

In accessing the same conceptual systems, Hannah and I were able to inhabit the lived experience of the other. The language we used, rooted in the senses and the physical experience of being human, is as far from abstracted language as we possibly could have gone. Though language may even be inadequate for the purpose of describing the feeling we both get when being healed by a fairy tale, that feeling of being healed in experiential terms is a space that both of us inhabited, during this interview.

Hannah and I left the interview knowing much more about each other than we did when we began. Where before I had only known her as an acquaintance and had probably spent a total of ten minutes talking to her, when we said goodbye to each other after the interview, I had tears in my eyes. Hannah had a twinkle in hers. Her parting remark to me was, “Let me know if you ever need anything, okay?” Remarkably, the knowledge we had gained about each other was not factual; it was rooted in the senses, in what causes us to feel safe, and what causes us to feel uncomfortable in the current reality.

Further research into the use of collaborative metaphor for the creation of spaces for empathy has implications spanning countless disciplines. In any context where an understanding of the positioning of the other is needed, whether this positioning is defined in terms of morality and emotion, culture and language, or private and social worlds, the definition of empathy remains
the same. To feel the experience of the other is to enter the experiential space, an action which
metaphor readily facilitates.

The value of empathy as a skill is not limited to the field of education, but the exploration
towards a technology of empathy via works of literature is certainly most pertinent in language
and literature classrooms. The empathy developed collaboratively in conversation, as Hannah
and I did, is just as easily brought about through the reading of text as it is between two people.
In the same way that I made meaning from Hannah’s expressed conceptual metaphor use by
accessing my own associations, which allowed me to enter the same space as Hannah, a reader
can similarly make meaning from metaphoric language in text. Arguably, this is when we as
readers feel most closely connected to a piece of literature, that is, when a book seems to
“understand” how we are feeling, and to be able to put that feeling into words, better than any
person we have ever known.

4.5 Summary

In collaborative discussion, Hannah expounded on many of the personal memories and
experiences that give *Peter Pan* individualized meaning for her. We learn not only that she
values the literature for its “escape factor” but also that the shift in her emotions as a result of
contact with the literature is of great value to her. Transacting with a reality that presents a
hierarchically higher framework for morality is both soothing in the moment, and as Taylor
(1989) suggests, crucial for human beings in their efforts to orient their selves in optimal
positioning in a space of choices.

In the fairy tale, Hannah finds her “greater moral framework” (Taylor, 1989). We know this to
be a very human, experientially based framework from her conceptual metaphor use. Hannah
roots her differentiation between what is good and what is bad, what is safe and what is not, in
her emotional orientation in a given reality. From the way she speaks of traveling to the fairy tale
reality repeatedly throughout her lifetime, we can see how highly she values a feeling of
emotional safety. Hannah finds in the fairy tale a moral framework that affirms this qualitative
estimation. At the same time, the affirmation that to feel good and safe is morally right gives
meaning and sense to other aspects of Hannah’s life, including her life as a teacher and as a
graduate student.
In a sense, the memories, feelings, and associations that comprise one’s “real life,” that might once have seemed in conflict with a lifelong desire to “shut everything out” and “go to Neverland,” are made more meaningful because Hannah finds her greater moral framework in the fairy tale reality. With conceptual metaphor as evidence, we form a picture of one fairy tale reader who comes into touch with that moral framework that gives purpose to all other aspects of her life. In short, the above analysis of conceptual metaphor has allowed us to view transactional reading (Rosenblatt, 1978) as both a meaning-making experience, and a powerful, self-shifting process.

Lastly, I have explored the notion of reflexivity in the context of this project, and shown how its limitations, when looked at from other angles, might be seen as doorways to new avenues, particularly in the case of establishing connections between metaphoric language and empathy. The gradual move in the field of qualitative research towards truly collaborative projects may be able to consider the true empathetic experience one of its goals. In keeping with the journey metaphor used in our interview, the creation of space for empathy through collaborative metaphor was something we simply “stumbled upon,” and what a joy it was to stop there for a moment.
Chapter 5
Conclusions

This study was inspired by the work of Bettelheim (1975) and initially was an attempt to document the effects of reading fairy tales on the emotions. In my extensive background reading, however, I learned very early on in the project that emotions and morality cannot be discussed independently of each other (Nussbaum, 2001), and soon came to a point where I could not discuss the effects of the literature on the reader without considering that reader’s orientation of self in space. Additionally, as soon as I began to look at reading as an act of self-examination, and an act of “identifying” in the face of narrative (Frank, 2010), I realized that the sociocultural context of the reader in the reading experience was crucial to the construction of her moral framework, in relation to which she would exhibit certain moral orientations that would offer complex, fluid images of the emoting self. Foucault’s (1988) genealogy of practices of self-examination over the ages allowed me to reposition my study in relation to Bettelheim’s; I saw that Bettelheim’s work was a product of its sociohistorical context, and despite its great value in contributing to the discussion, had only addressed one dimension of the multidimensional phenomenon I aimed to illuminate.

I had opted to view the phenomenon of the psychological fairy tale through a new lens, and furthermore decided to approach it from within the territory of language and literacy education. In the process I found a reliable grounding element in Rosenblatt’s (1978) transactional theory. Transactional theory allowed me to take into consideration sociocultural context and acts of self-examination at the same time, and functioned as a solid yet flexible framework for the study. I used conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff, 1993) as a unit of analysis since it provided contextually situated, experientially based linguistic evidence for cognitive activity. In this way, I found that I could approach what previously had been deemed a purely psychological phenomenon from a comfortable position within the boundaries of language and literacy education, using language and reflection on meaning-making from literature as my sources of evidence for the nature of cognitive activity in response to the fairy tale.
At this point, I will revisit the questions I posed in Chapter 1 and evaluate the extent to which I have provided an answer to these questions using the framework and project design I developed. Recall that I had posed the following questions early on in the study:

1. How does the participant make sense of her experience reading fairy tales specifically with regard to their effect on her sense of self?
2. How is the understanding of emotional safety and stability expressed in discussions of the fairy tale, in such a way that is contextualized within the physical and sociocultural environment?

In response to my first question, I had assumed that my participant would make sense of her favorite fairy tale in a transactional manner, which is to say that she would select from among her personal memories, feelings, and associations in order to construct meaning from the text. Certain elements of the narrative, I predicted, would call out to her more strongly than others, their relevance to her own life dependent on a great number of contextual factors. I did not, however, anticipate the depth of the results in answering this question. Hannah’s use of conceptual metaphor offered a picture of her emotional orientations with regard to a strong sense of morality that was based in her senses as a human being in the physical world (Jolles, 1972). The contrast between the realities of “the real world” and the “fairy tale world” showed Hannah’s sense of alignment with the moral framework present within the fairy tale reality (Taylor, 1989). I had not anticipated that Hannah would find comfort in the fairy tale that satisfied her moral inclinations, and that these moral inclinations would be so closely tied to her emotive behavior.

Additionally, this contact with a greater moral framework clearly had an effect on Hannah even when she did not inhabit the fairy tale reality. I had initially thought that the simple memory of a comforting “escape” via fiction was the mechanism that made fairy tale lovers want to revisit the stories, over and over, but I was delighted to see, through metaphor analysis in moral space, that it was this contact with a highly valued moral framework that assigned meaning and purpose to other aspects of Hannah’s life, aspects that lay outside of the reading experience, and which would, by definition, always be completely separate from the fairy tale reality. I saw that Hannah was not simply “getting lost in a book”; she was affirming her sense of her moral self in coming into contact with that book, and then applying this affirmation to the many other realities she inhabits throughout her life. Even with this great depth of connection, transactional theory
(Rosenblatt, 1978) still stood out as the overarching mechanism by which Hannah was able to “touch” the fairy tale’s moral framework. The story had an effect on her because she supplied pieces of her own self and reality in responding to and making meaning from it. The transactional nature of her response, as predicted, was crucial to the notion of Hannah being affected by the fairy tale at all.

In response to my second question, I had predicted that Hannah’s expressions of emotional safety and stability would manifest themselves via conceptual metaphor. I expected that Hannah would select metaphorical concepts that were linked to her sense of physical, experiential comfort, such as IDEAS ARE FOOD or GOODNESS IS WARMTH. I expected to see more concepts of this nature, that is, of the nature that corresponded directly to physical comfort. I also did not necessarily think that all of the concepts accessed would work together in some systematic fashion (Danesi, 2004; Lakoff, 1993). I was surprised to find that rather than there being many concepts accessed which had to do with physical comfort, there was in fact one major concept accessed, which entailed many subconcepts. This was the concept of READING AS A JOURNEY. By itself, a journey is not necessarily a comforting, pleasant experience. It can be, but we don’t include this aspect in our general definitions of travel, because we know that people travel for reasons both good and bad. The data revealed that it was the distance and separation between two locations, the departure and the destination, that rendered this journey a comforting one. Setting this metaphorical movement within moral space, I then saw that the separation between locations corresponded to a contrast between moral frameworks, one which was highly valued by Hannah and very satisfying to come into contact with, and another which would inevitably disappoint her, simply because, as so many have said before, reality is not a fairy tale.

That “life is not a fairy tale” is not a novel concept. What is new, however, is an illumination of the transactional technology by which this knowledge may come about. The current project has revealed the meaning-making experience with fairy tales to be, potentially, an opportunity to interact with a moral framework that satisfies our human, innate senses of justice (Jolles, 1972). In that process, the experience also assigns meaning to those parts of our lives that we access in constructing the fictional reality of the fairy tale.
5.1 Limitations

For an in-depth examination such as this one, a large participant pool is not a reasonable goal. Furthermore, offering fairy tales to participants who may or may not read them aesthetically is also unrealistic and inefficient. The choice to seek out this phenomenon of the emotionally affective fairy tale and study it in depth was therefore both a strategy and a limitation. My strategy was to outline the mechanism of the emotional shift as a result of reading, and I achieved this purpose with the help of the participant I chose, by virtue of the fact that I already knew she had such an experience reading fairy tales. The limitation of this example, however, is in its particularity. These results do not indicate a process that can be called in any way generalizable. Rather, the phenomenon explored here simply indicates that such a process is possible. Possibility is of course an immensely powerful thing. In this project, we have observed the actual phenomenon of a fairy tale providing emotional comfort to its reader, and have seen an outline of one mechanism by which this happens. This actuality, albeit particular, is a prerequisite for any implications to follow.

Additionally, that the study was carried out by me as insider allowed us to cultivate a space for empathy through the collaborative construction of metaphor. Hannah and I were able to make an emotional connection during the interview by inhabiting the same conceptual space. That our relationship to each other was shifted as a result of our collaborative language use forces me to reconsider the use of the terms “insider” and “outsider”. When we are exploring the emotive identity, what does it truly mean to be an insider-researcher? To what extent is this possible? In what ways must two emotive selves be aligned in order for the researcher to be considered an insider? These questions, in light of this qualitative exploration of the emotive identity, invite further research.

5.2 Implications for Literature Education

It is exciting to consider the implications of the results for the English literature classroom. After all, what more could a teacher of literature ask of her students, than for them to become so absorbed in their literature that it stays with them and guides their moral choices, all throughout their adult lives? This relationship with literature is personal, even intimate, and is the height of connection between author, text, and reader. One might even say that this communion of aspects in a reading experience is the ultimate goal of literature, that is, to connect, to communicate, and
to come to understand that meaning which another has guided into existence in penning down a story. The implications for the results therefore involve the use of transactional reading in a new and socioculturally situated way.

5.2.1 A New Transactional Reading

Kemmis & Mutton (2011) outlined the true definition of “education” (as opposed to “schooling”) as follows:

. . . education is a process by which children, young people and adults are initiated into forms of understanding, modes of action, and ways of relating to one another and the world, that foster individual and collective self-expression, individual and collective self-development, and individual and collective self-determination, and that are oriented towards the good for each person and the good for humankind. (p. 18)

If we apply the above definition of education to the English literature classroom, it immediately becomes clear that many English literature classrooms, at all levels of schooling, do not foster the sort of self-development that “orient[s]…towards the good” (Kemmis and Mutton, 2011) However, in this study we have seen that such an orientation is possible. Hannah’s is an example of a relationship with literature that not only enhances her scholarly abilities, it fulfils a goal of helping her live well in the world, both for herself and in her interactions with others.

Although I have examined only one particular instance of such a transactional relationship with literature, it is nevertheless a shining example of what a true education in literature can do for a human being in the world. The word education itself of course comes from the Latin ex + ducere, meaning “to lead outwards,” and in Hannah we absolutely see the way that a story, in constructing a moral framework and allowing Hannah to come into contact with, transact with, and exist in that framework, repeatedly guides Hannah’s inclinations as a teacher, a graduate student, and a human being outwards to radiate this framework into the world around her, even in those moments when she is not reading at all.
5.2.2 Emotional Education in the Language and Literature Classroom

The definition of education from Kemmis and Mutton (2011), distinct from the notion of schooling, provides a space for relationships with literature such as Hannah’s in the classroom, and in the curriculum. More likely, as in Hannah’s case, readers stumble upon such relationships in their own, private explorations of literature, but with Hannah’s case in mind minor changes can certainly be made in literature classrooms to facilitate the likelihood of students establishing personal relationships with literature. The moral framework of stories, for example, might be considered before readings are assigned. The personal background of students can be taken into consideration by teachers in suggesting particular literature, especially those students in great need of guidance.

Further to strengthening the relationships between students and teachers, the exploration of the emotive identity in response to literature is important because it tells us what readers need. What gives students a sense of comfort, when perhaps everything else in their world seems to be going wrong? The notion of having one’s sense of morality affirmed is hugely powerful, especially for children (van der Kolk, 2014). Studies that illuminate this phenomenon as a fluid technology can open space for discussions of the importance of addressing emotions in the classroom. If this moral affirmation results in a love of literature, as we have seen in Hannah, the possibility of a lifetime of loving literature is well within reach. This certainly constitutes an education in literature, rather than simply a schooling.

Additionally, Hannah’s use of conceptual metaphor in the act of “narrative identifying” (Frank, 2010, p. 49) is an area which begs for further exploration. Hannah uses language to situate her self in a place of moral and emotional comfort, and to take this positioning with her throughout her daily life. The evidence provided by conceptual metaphor in this study makes a strong case for the previously underestimated yet critical role of language and narrative in the processing of emotions. To build a greater body of research based on the single case presented in this study is potentially to plant the seeds of an emotional education, of an emotionally supportive experience with language and literature, directly in the language and literature classroom. In doing so, we might very well change the nature of education altogether, with the good of humankind in mind.

Early in Chapter 2 of this project, I had written of my efforts to illuminate the multidimensional nature of the emotionally healing response to fairy tales. Bettelheim’s (1975) work, as I’ve
mentioned, was a product of his sociohistorical context at the time, and while it focused on increasing the knowledge of the self, I had pointed out via the work of Hutton (1988) that it was in fact our contextual positioning which determined the nature of that knowledge. While I have certainly acknowledged that there is a greater matrix in which the technology of self-examination takes place, a matrix which Bettelheim did not acknowledge, I have only been able to construct a model of that matrix through my own way of seeing things. Let this project therefore add one more dimension to the growing image of the psychological fairy tale, and at the same time, invite further additions. As Hannah put it, the potential to construct a complex body of knowledge centered around what comforts us as humans on a physical, sensual level, lies simply in our own “possibility to imagine something and create something together that’s there...in our own ability to see.”
References


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doi:10.1177/0956797614536401


## Appendix A

### Relationships with Fairy Tales: Hannah and Peter Pan

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<td>E</td>
<td>I think we can start by talking about what fairy tales you wanted to talk about today (and more than one is totally fine), anything that you had in mind.</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>I was thinking after I got your email last night, one that sort of stuck out for me and has influenced me I guess… I remembered that when I was a little girl, I couldn’t tell you the age, the first book that I owned (so my parents were immigrants and everything was kind of like, we need this, let’s put our money into buying a business, let’s put our money into buying a house and paying it off, so there wasn’t a lot of room for anything extra) so one of the first possessions was a book. I don’t know if you know the little Golden Books, where it says, “This book belongs to…” and you put your name in it, and it was Peter Pan. So it was a Disney one, so I read it like a million and one times and I thought it was really magical… this guy coming in, and fairy dust, and taking these people, these three kids, and Wendy, I don’t remember the two brothers’ names, John I think or…</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Yeah…Michael, maybe?</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>Yeah, Michael and John, something like that, and then they go to Neverland, and I read it a million and one times, and it was so magical. So, Peter Pan, definitely. Thinking about Peter Pan, I find that I keep coming back to Peter Pan in different ways. When I was asked to design a class, or a syllabus for my teaching, I didn’t put Peter Pan on there, but this idea of Neverland and children’s literature being a place of “going somewhere” like Neverland and having these adventures, I always draw on this example, and as an undergrad you read the full Peter Pan, and you realize it’s not as fairy tale as you thought it was.</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>Interesting, wow. I didn’t have any awareness that there was a full Peter Pan! All I know is the Disney…</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>There was a full Peter Pan, and I remember as an undergrad taking it and being shocked, like “Oh my god, this isn’t as innocent and nice as…” It’s actually quite a dark story!</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>I need to read that.</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>And there’s sexual innuendos, and Tinker Bell is not this really nice person…</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>…she’s really jealous.</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>She’s jealous, and then I was thinking about these connections that I had to Peter Pan, and the first movie that I saw by myself – so there’s an age when you realize, oh I can go to the movies without having a date, or I can go to the movies without a group of friends, I can actually go by myself? Wow! – so the first movie that I saw was Finding Neverland, which was the Johnny Depp version, I don’t remember the year, and I don’t know if it did that well in the theatres but I remember I almost had the theatre to myself, so it was kind of cool, and that’s kind of a dark, hopeful version of it, and that was interesting as well.</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>I guess it’s a little more human; I saw it on Netflix the other day.</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>It is more human, but it also demonstrates the capacity, the spirit of Neverland, and then there was the whole controversy with J.M. Barrie himself, right?</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>I don’t know about that.</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>Yeah, let’s not go there! [laughs]</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>Oh my gosh, I have so much to read on Peter Pan. This is exciting though!</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>Yeah! But Peter Pan really did that for me and I think that as I grow older, this quest to be young – Peter Pan is this boy that never grows up – and not even just the idea of boyhood, but the idea of boyhood and Peter being kind of gender neutral… I don’t remember if it comes out in the books, or in the movie, I don’t know why I feel this way, there was a whole play version that had Allison Williams in the role of Peter Pan, and so she had this girl-boy kind of thing… so typically I like novels or fairy tales that have a female character, so how is it that Peter Pan resonated with me, and I think there’s this neutrality</td>
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to it. I think the first line of the book is “All children grow up except for one” so there’s not that maleness or femaleness, so it’s interesting that I would relate to it because it’s not my typical thing to relate to. Maybe as I’m getting older this idea of staying young forever is kind of a cool thing…

E …is really lucrative, yeah, it’s really interesting what you say about children’s literature being a movement. I actually never thought about it that way, but that’s really, really true.

H It’s kind of like this trajectory; you start something off when you’re a kid, and then when you think back on it, you think, how has it sort of progressed, as I’ve aged, as I’ve grown up with it, if you will, and moved forward with it, and definitely I think it impacts in this way.

E I like the thought of growing up with a fairy tale and revisiting it; that happened to me too, mine was Sleeping Beauty…

H …I thought of Sleeping Beauty too when you asked! Because Sleeping Beauty was the first Disney movie that I watched.

E So terrifying, right?

H Yeah!

E I realized maybe a year ago that that was the source of my childhood nightmares, Maleficent! I had all these recurring witch nightmares; I think that was the first scary thing I ever saw.

H I think for me it goes back to my childhood where we didn’t have a lot of channels, we didn’t have cable, so I think I was at a friend’s house, actually, and it was like the “Disney Movie of the Week,” and it was so exciting for me. I don’t think I was scared, but I was sad about all this avoidance of her putting her finger on the spinning needle, and then fate comes in, and that for me was really sad. And then the prince and Maleficent and - just sort of on this idea of this trajectory of life - I went and saw it in the theatre, Maleficent, the new one, and I tweeted about how it was awesome in the sense that it was such a different look at Maleficent in a way that was really empowering, you know what I mean?
<p>| E | I’m so happy that you said that! I had a life-changing moment with that movie. It was the moment where she woke up to find her wings ripped off. |
| H | Okay, yeah I can see that that was kind of a deep moment. |
| E | That was intense right? Her scream was so intense for me, and I just felt like, because it was Angelina Jolie, that it was somehow a whole new experience for me. |
| H | Yeah, I really like the central message of “love’s true kiss” being not something that’s going to come from the external, like some guy has to validate you in that way. I took my eight-year-old daughter, and I just thought that was a really good message for her. |
| E | Totally. I notice a lot of fairy tale movies doing that recently. Although, did you see Cinderella? |
| H | Yes! |
| E | …although I loved that also! |
| H | I know! I was telling you, I was thinking, I feel like I should critique this somehow, but you know what, let me just enjoy it! [laughs] |
| E | I know. I can’t not love it. I can’t. Especially the scene with the dress, I was like, oh this could go on forever and I wouldn’t mind. |
| H | Right? And the message was be kind and all this, and this is all nice but, you know, sometimes you need to fight back, right? But I was thinking, Disney’s got me on this one, and it was interesting because, I think it was Kenneth – what’s his last name, I’m missing it right now – you know the Shakespeare… |
| E | Branagh? No… |
| H | Yeah! He directed it, so it had that whole Shakespearian feel to it, and I like that. |</p>
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<th>E</th>
<th>Yeah. The choices that they made in that movie were really interesting to me. Like, you would think that things were headed in a different direction, but they seem to be returning to what it…</th>
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<td>H</td>
<td>It’s a classic.</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>…initially was, yeah. And people seem to really like that.</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>Yes. Absolutely.</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>And I’m so glad that we get to talk about Sleeping Beauty too, these princess stories are the ones I grew up with. Let’s see, maybe I should visit my interview questions, hmm…are there any moments from any of these stories that you recall specifically, above all other ones, and for any reason, like they were really exciting, or it was really scary, or bothersome in some way, like you know the Angelina Jolie with the wings ripped off thing?</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>Yeah, I think for me, and you know I feel like in many ways I really did have sort of a privileged not just upbringing, but life in general, I feel like I don’t have any deep hurt necessarily, so I don’t know how helpful this is, but I feel like for me more than anything, it was a realm of possibility, that has touched me. So the fact that this place existed, Neverland, the fact that it was there, this place of imagination that you could travel to, I felt like that was the moment where, everything sort of comes together, the realization that you don’t have to live in the real world. Even now, we were talking earlier about reading things that you have to as opposed to reading the things you want to, and I’ve come to a point where I’ve realized I don’t necessarily want to read certain things and I’m not going have the time to do it, so I’m going to focus on the things I really do want to read. When I read for pleasure now, or when I watch tv, and I don’t watch a lot of tv, when I do watch tv it’s like, I don’t know if you know this show, Once Upon a Time?</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>Yes!</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>That’s what I’ll watch, and I think it’s brilliant that they have sort of reimagined these fairy tale characters, and it’s so interesting, and that <em>is</em> Neverland! I would love to sit around with their writers and just look at their process, and knowing that they’re going to Neverland every week, you know this realm of possibility, so in my deepest desires, this is what I want to do. If I were to just shut everything out, I would love to just visit Neverland. And that’s what I want to do in the work that I do, that’s what I want to do when I stand up and be a teacher and teach my class, that’s the journey I want to take them on when I teach, so I’m like, let’s go to Neverland together! Let’s look at this possibility…what’s going on, what’s happening, what does it mean for us? How do you interpret it, what do you see in Neverland? Maybe you see, you know, a jealous fairy, maybe I see, you know, this Captain Hook…what do we see and how is that different, how does it allow for the possibility to imagine something and create something together that’s there, not even in the mind of the author, or the Disney book author, writer, composer, director, but in our own ability to see things that are there. So I think that fairy tale offers me that way to escape, a way to reimagine…and lots of times I don’t want to live in the world, you know what I mean?</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>Yeah, yeah. It’s the whole, like, “anything you want” thing, like literally <em>anything</em> you want, you can build that, and it’s funny that you mention not coming from a place of deep hurt with it, because I think it’s actually the same coming from a place of deep hurt, because this realm of possibility is huge, because you’re like, it doesn’t have to be this way, I don’t have to feel like this, I can go <em>there</em> and feel like <em>this</em>.</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>Yes, yes. And even the fact that, you know, I didn’t come from a place of deep hurt but even extreme complacency or boredom can also be depressing. And sadness as well, like if we need escape for instance, if we need to reimage, I think that those two mediums can bring us to fairy tale, and bring us to getting something out of it.</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>Yeah, actually I’ve been thinking a lot recently about the idea of a dormant identity which you reminded me of when you were talking about boredom. I feel like there is a dormant identity for a lot of people, and types of fiction are ways of waking that up.</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>Yes, yes. Just last night I was telling my class about psychoanalytic criticism, and I was telling them that one way to do a psychoanalytic critique is to critique yourself, and to look at yourself and sort of say, why is it that I’m drawn to certain genres, what is it about these genres that speaks to me, and there’s a self-awareness that comes with that, like why do I like fairy tale, more than - and I mentioned to you that I trained in Victorian literature, in this very realist genre - but now I can’t stand reading it. I need to read this stuff, I need to read dystopian, I need to read fairy tale. I just read one that was like this expanded fairy tale called Uprooted.</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>Uprooted, I like that title.</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>Yeah, it’s a cool book, I would recommend it, so this is when I read for fun or when I watch tv for that escapism, this is what I do. Even though I should be reading other stuff, I find it difficult to be engaged in it. And even in academic writing I quote from Alice in Wonderland or I look for quotations from these fantasy books…</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>That’s so awesome.</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>…I will always tie something fictional or fantasy-like to the reality of what I’m talking about. I try to do that all the time.</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>I love that idea.</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>I can’t write otherwise.</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>Yeah, yeah. I know what you mean. Everything that I do, no matter how academic, needs to be connected to these fantasies. My whole life centers around fantasy, you know, and I’m glad that not a lot of people know that because a lot of people probably wouldn’t take it seriously.</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>But that’s the thing though! We say people won’t take it seriously, but I’ve noticed like, I’m in an academic conference or something like that, and I’ll quote a line from Shakespeare, and people will change, you know, affectivity of literature speaks to them</td>
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on some kind of level that is unconscious, and so people kind of spread out and they’re like, let’s talk about this.

E Your quotes do that, because I remember you quoting in [professor’s name] class and people just being like “Oooh…” [sound of intrigue/peaked interest] and I keep thinking about this idea of creating opportunities for empathy in your language, and what do people do in order to make those opportunities. And you know that metaphor is one of the things I look at, or people tend to give contextual details about their own life in order to do that, I think that’s a strategy used by like, basic levels of language learning, if you’re looking at it that way…

H …this idea of metaphor, poetics ([professor’s name] mentioned that he reads poetry, right?) The poetics, what was I reading recently, god I can’t remember…I forgot but it was basically this idea that what really resonates with us is in poetic form, it’s lines that rhyme, it’s metaphors that are vibrant, it’s beauty of words, like words that capture the beauty of our experiences, and that’s not to say that, okay, this feels really aesthetic, this truth in beauty is sort of this higher up, it’s not a necessity…lots of times even in the darkest places, in the darkest times, through wars and stuff, the way that people express themselves is through poetry or art, and it resonates with people I think.

E Yeah, I think that people will always choose emotion over no emotion, even if it’s painful emotion. To read, that will still resonate more than something that doesn’t have that.

H Yeah, and even if we’re looking for an action, like for a result because of it, moving past a trauma, or moving past any horrific situation, or you know a war, to move people you will refer to these things. You’ll look at the paintings, you’ll look at the words that come out, it touches people I think.

E Wow, I love where this conversation is going, this is reenergizing my thesis!

H That’s good, I’m glad!
| E | Let me see if I have anything else exciting...oh, here’s a good one, do you think that any fairy tales have affected the way that you think about yourself, or the way that you look at yourself? |
| H | Sure, absolutely. I think that that is fundamental, fairy tales are fundamental, to who I am, and I’m going to draw on that Neverland metaphor as well: Sometimes I feel like I am really spacey, really out there, but then I recognize that if I allow that idea to be in me, if I allow myself to go to Neverland, my writing is stronger, my performance as a teacher is stronger, my empathy with others is stronger...so absolutely fundamental to who I am, and it’s taken me a long time to say, ok, I’m not this person, and lots of times it’s hard when you get feedback, or like, we were just talking to the lady outside and she was saying that she’s having difficulty incorporating all of the feedback because sometimes it’s negative, or people think you should be one way and then you’re not and you don’t feel like you fit in, and fairy tale, and I think the ability to think creatively in the space and embrace that side of myself, even if it makes me look dumb amongst others, is okay because I know that, you know, I’m going to be okay. I can go and visit Neverland if you’re going to traumatize me. |
| E | Yes, absolutely. It’s as if there’s a warmth associated with it, with that fairy tale space, right? |
| H | Yes! Yes. |
| E | I actually remember as a kid in elementary school kind of retreating into my coat sometimes you know because I was so nervous all the time - I had really bad anxiety beginning in childhood - and just kind of curling into my coat and thinking about these books that I’d read and those worlds that I was able to create by reading them and there was this comfort there, like nobody can touch me here, you can’t make fun of me, this is in my head, I made this, you know? |
| H | Yes, yes, yeah! Absolutely! Like I remember, one of my first memories is in our Kindergarten or maybe even pre-Kindergarten class, so my dad was downstairs with the teacher, and we had like a little spiral staircase and there was like a little alcove with just
books for students, and I remember hearing the teacher tell my dad, oh she’s lovely, she’s quiet, she’s a good girl, and getting all this praise and being up in this place of books, and just curling up with a book, so having this positive reinforcement, while I’m in a place of books, that’s one of my earliest memories. And I remember even other kids playing and sometimes they can be cruel, right? And I would just go up there, and read. And through high school, through junior high, you know these difficult times, it was a like, a book a day kinda thing, and I could go through them fast, and I would not end, you know, it was like next, next, next, like you couldn’t get enough, and so in many ways it felt like I didn’t have to deal with things that my friends were dealing with, this stuff, and I would just be like, “okay, I’ll just go read a book,” or “I can’t wait to get to this book tonight!”

E Yeah! I miss that feeling. I feel like there is a phase of your life where that’s really easy, like I love young adult literature because you can just eat those books, you can just eat them, like they’re so easy to read and they’re so wonderful to read, that’s like the sweet spot, for me.

H Yeah, and now to me too, it’s like, oh my god, I’m doing something good for myself when I allow myself to just read a book. I remember my son the other day, because I’ve been reading all these academic books lately, asked me, is that for school? Because it looked like a novel and I’m like [smiles] “No…” and he goes, “are you enjoying it?” And I’m like [smiling] “It’s pure bliss…” honestly, and it felt like eating, you know like some kind of chocolate delight in Neverland, and you know birds are singing and you’re just like, [smiling] “Aaahh!” Right? And I’m not lying about this feeling, so absolutely…

E I always think of the food metaphor too. I don’t know why but when you read, it feels like eating, you’re like [eating sounds] “mmhmm, uuhuhh” like it feels like you’re actually consuming it, I don’t know where that comes from.

H And if the words are really well done, it’s like this sweetness, like this is really a pleasurable feeling.

E That’s so interesting…you know I think there’s something there with like, the feeling of being understood, the physical feeling that you get from that, and also the feeling that you
get from eating chocolate. I don’t know, I feel like there might be something really physiological there.

H  It’s interesting, you know, I think affect theory kind of goes there. There’s a really interesting book, I did a presentation on a project for a class in my MA, called Ugly Feelings, which would be interesting (Ngai), check it out, she talks about how certain feelings are embodied in text and what that means and how we -

E  Ooooo! [enthusiastically intrigued]

H  Yeah, and she writes really well, Ngai, she’s done some other stuff too, but she talks about how some words actually make us want to throw up and why do they make us want to, and sort of the physiological along with the text and how that’s done and what it means…

E  I should definitely read that. I’m really trying to get at what it is about the fairy tale language that makes that happen, especially for me in a time when I was actually scared of reading certain things, the physically comfortable feeling that I was getting from fairy tales, I’m just trying to understand what that is, you know?

H  A person I did my MA with too just published a piece, I don’t know where it was, I’ll see if I can find it for you, but she talks about how during childbirth, she can’t read certain works. Or even during the postpartum period, she can’t read certain things even though she’s an English major, she’s a writer…she can’t do it, it’s a wonderfully written piece, I’ll see if I can find it for you.

E  That sounds really interesting. I think that’s probably going to happen to me, I think I’m just going to go completely insane when I’m pregnant and afterwards.

H  It’s interesting that there are certain things you can’t read at certain moments of your life, and it’s interesting to think about why that is, and then, when you recognize why that is, and you write about it, and you sort of explore that place, I think it must be really liberating.
Yeah, yeah, the image I always get is sort of, raising up a level, and seeing yourself down there reading a book, and just being able to take that third person perspective, and some people would call it just knowing what you look like to other people, but I also just mean being able to understand what you are doing at the time and why it’s happening, and why you’re loving this so much and why you’re scared of that, you know.

E

Yeah, and the weird thing about self-awareness is that that self-awareness that you don’t have, you don’t know about, and I think that’s why it feels so weird, to like, move up these levels.

H

Interesting.

E

Yeah. That’s like a big topic for me recently.

H

Cool.

E

Well, it’s 1:37, I know you have to go soon, before we end was there anything else in particular you came wanting to mention today? I had a lot of questions about how you would characterize your relationships with the tales, and I think we did talk a bit about that.

H

Hmmmm…how I characterize my relationship with the tale, yeah, I feel like I couldn’t live without it and I want to bring it in…sometimes I abandon it because of other things and that makes me sad; it’s like a friend that you sort of abandon, and that’s not good for me, but clearly the book doesn’t give a shit, right? [laughs] But I mean, to have that relationship with a book, a text, with a story, and with the characters…I mean, I remember I was doing a project once and I was looking for little memes to present, and I found one that said, “I like characters in books more than I like real people,” or like, “Characters in books are my best friends,” and I actually knew someone who was like, oh my god, Heathcliff! [laughs], and they actually will prefer Heathcliff or some other character to real people.
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<th></th>
<th>Yes! That sounds like me and all of my best friends.</th>
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<td>H</td>
<td>Right? And it’s interesting to see how that plays out. I was at a talk once and all the girls were into this Twilight thing and were like Edward Edward Edward…and you know, anyone who stepped into that role, because of the Twilight popularity, all these girls are like, Edward is <em>this</em> and Edward is <em>that</em>, and it seemed like any guy who stepped into that role would have been a heartthrob.</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>Yeah, lucky Robert Pattinson. And who even talks about him anymore?</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>I think he’s still there, I think he tried to distance himself from it…</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>That’s one of those roles you just can’t come back from, like you’re always going to be Edward.</td>
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<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Yeah, and if you try to distance yourself, then, like, nobody knows what you’re doing. And there’s this sadness too, you know, we didn’t really talk about this, but I think there is this sadness associated with fairy tales, when you close them, and it’s not just about closing a tale and having to move on, but for me I think that if it’s a really great story, I’ve really visited this place…like to go back to the Peter Pan thing, it’s <em>sad</em> in the end, like he starts forgetting, I mean in the real story, he starts forgetting the experiences that they had, and Wendy grows up, and she becomes this mother figure, and I talk about this a lot even with my husband, like just the other day I took one of those personality quizzes, I do them all the time [laughs] and guess what age I got, I’m obsessed with age, and he was like, “I don’t know, 20?” sort of joking around, and I think the quiz was “Tell us who your favorite celebrities are and we’ll tell you how old you are,” so I picked and I got <em>fifteen</em>! And I was telling him, “I got <em>fifteen</em>!” [laughs] and he was like, “man, you never want to grow up,” and I think that I do have that sense of, “I don’t really want to grow up, it’s not fun to grow up, it’s sad.” I don’t like what happens to Wendy at the end of Peter Pan, and so I have this sort of arrested adulthood…</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>I think I might be having that too…</td>
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<td><strong>H</strong></td>
<td>But it’s okay! And that’s what I’m trying to get to, that fairy tales allow that, but then there’s that sadness when it’s done, having to go back to the real world…</td>
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<td><strong>E</strong></td>
<td>Yeah, you have to make a bigger return.</td>
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<td><strong>H</strong></td>
<td>…and so, how do you navigate that? And I think for me I just want to read the next one, I don’t want to leave that place.</td>
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<td><strong>E</strong></td>
<td>I guess the ending of a fairy tale in particular is a bit more final, whereas with some kind of realistic fiction, you can kind of picture it continuing on without you, but the fairy tale is like, it’s only there while you’re reading it.</td>
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<td><strong>H</strong></td>
<td>Yeah that’s true…I have to, for my dissertation, read more realist fiction and I’m finding it really difficult to get into.</td>
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<td><strong>E</strong></td>
<td>What kind of stuff are you reading?</td>
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<td><strong>H</strong></td>
<td>Well, I’m looking at representations of Muslim women, and I need to find a couple of works that embody this idea, so I picked this one up, and I can’t get into it, I’m just like, [shakes head] “Nooo…”, you know what I mean?</td>
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<td><strong>E</strong></td>
<td>It’s just not holding your attention…</td>
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<td><strong>H</strong></td>
<td>It’s not engaging to me, and it’s well reviewed, it’s well done apparently, and I’ve had it for a couple of days now and you know typically, if it was a fairy tale or something, I’d be done, but I can’t get past page 10, it’s just a struggle.</td>
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<td><strong>E</strong></td>
<td>Anytime I see books like this and read people’s reviews I’m always struck by people who can just read anything, like some people will tell me, “Oh I’m reading the latest New York Times bestseller” and I’m just thinking, it’s not like that for me, I can’t just pick up any book and finish it.</td>
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| **H** | It used to be like that for me though, I could do that before, I’d be like, “Oh they made a movie about this? Let me read this,” and I could really just go through them, and if I got past the first couple of chapters, I felt the need to finish it, you know what I mean? I was
like, I need to see how this story ends even if it’s really badly written or I’m not engaged, I still have to find out what happens, but talking about arrested adulthood, this is the thing though, I can’t do it anymore. Now it’s just like, no, let me just do the fairy tale, and clearly there is a mark here, and I don’t know what sort of pushed me over the edge in that way.

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<th>Is this a recent change?</th>
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<td>H</td>
<td>I would say maybe in the last two years, maybe it has something to do with doing an MA, or maybe even a bit before that, I mean, I enjoyed doing the MA though, I can’t say that I didn’t. We had to read a lot of stuff, and I really did enjoy it; it felt luxurious to be able to sort of be living in the lap of luxury, because I did it straight up, I didn’t go to work or anything.</td>
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<tr>
<th>E</th>
<th>Yeah, actually I do the same thing too and that’s exactly the word that I use; it’s such a luxury.</th>
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<td>H</td>
<td>Absolutely, and sometimes it was tough, but still it was great, and we didn’t read fairy tale, I did a lot of Victorian, I did Shakespeare, yeah a lot of Victorian, and Victorian, you know is rooted in the 19th century experience, and it’s very realist, you know Dickens, and…</td>
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<th>E</th>
<th>My dad loves that stuff.</th>
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<td>H</td>
<td>Yeah, George Eliot, Jane Austen, that kinda thing.</td>
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<th>E</th>
<th>I tried to read Jane Austen the other day.</th>
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<td>H</td>
<td>It’s hard. This was just two years ago, I wrote papers on it kinda thing, so I read most of Jane Austen, and I picked up one the other day, and I couldn’t get into it, I don’t know, I don’t know, maybe it’s because of like, so you start your MA and you’re still in that honeymoon phase, but then you realize, oh my god I need to read a whole bunch of theory, I need to read a whole bunch of studies, because the shift for me between MLA and APA, just that shift, and looking at empirical data and realizing, okay I hate that stuff, so how can I combine them both and then find ways to navigate what I do like? Now,</td>
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when I read for pleasure, I don’t want to feel like I *have* to read something, so what is it that I like to read? I like to read fairy, I like to read fantasy, and just embracing that, this is the escape factor for me.

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<td>E</td>
<td>Me too, me too. Well, I guess here is a good place for us to end, is this good timing for you?</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>Yep.</td>
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**Appendix B**

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<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Theoretical Questions</th>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
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<td>How does a fairy tale lover make sense of her experience reading a fairy tale?</td>
<td>What is the nature of the conceptual metaphor usage in the participant’s response?</td>
<td>What fairy tale have you come to talk about today?</td>
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<td>What can be said about the nature of this response in literacy practice?</td>
<td>What evidence does conceptual metaphor use offer for characterizing the participant’s method of constructing the self in literacy practice?</td>
<td>How would you describe your relationship with this fairy tale?</td>
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<td>What kinds of emotions come up while you’re reading it, thinking about it, or talking about it?</td>
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<td>Does the story remind you of some things or events or people in your own life?</td>
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<td>What discursive influences are at work during the emotional response to a fairy tale?</td>
<td>What assumptions are implied by the participant’s language in responding to the fairy tale?</td>
<td>What was life like for you when you first read this tale?</td>
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<td>Where were you? What was your living situation like, your perception of yourself and your past, present and future identities?</td>
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<td>Why do you think this story appealed to you so much at the time?</td>
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<td>What evidence is there for an expanded perception of self (a greater “self-awareness”) as a result of making meaning from the fairy tale?</td>
<td>What can we say about the moral space within which the participant orients herself in responding to the fairy tale? How does a fairy tale lover understand her experience with reading a fairy tale with regard to her sense of self?</td>
<td>Is there anything about the story that bothers you, excites you, or makes you think in some way? What kind of emotional relationship do you have with this tale? How did this tale affect your way of thinking about yourself? About others? Did it affect your thinking at all?</td>
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