

# Fiction and Non-Fiction Seminar:

"The Snow Queen," "A Tale as Old as Time," "Female-named Hurricanes Kill more than Male Hurricanes...", and "Clueless Man Claims Territory in North Sudan to Make Daughter Princess"

-Next class we will have a seminar on the recent fiction and non-fiction selections you've read. In order to prepare, you must collect and analyze quotes from the texts, as well as come up with well thought-out questions for class discussion. You should prepare a question related to four of the six following topics:

- Gender
- Age/Maturity
- Nature
- Imagination v. Reality
- Geography/Border (both physical and national)
- Miscellaneous

-Your questions should be analytical and insightful, and you should have an "answer"/thesis in mind. YOU MUST EMAIL ME YOUR QUESTIONS BY 7:00 A.M. THE DAY OF THE SEMINAR.

-The seminar will be split into two groups at random, and you will be graded on both your participation and your prep/notes during the discussion. Below is a sample of proper seminar prep:

## 1. Topic: Gender

### Evidence:

"Tale as Old as Time" → title of the article itself only focuses on "Princess"

- "male characteristics such as "rescues" were most often completed by male characters" (1).

- "Male traits were shown as strong, explore, assertive, unemotional, athletic, brave, gives advice, hero, rescues, deep voice, and goals of work" (2).

- "It's not right for a woman to read. Soon she starts getting "ideas" and "thinking"—Gaston...implies that it is unacceptable for women to be educated" (2).

- "One male mouse says 'we can help' but the female mouse says 'leave the sewing to the women'" (2).

- "Cinderella was really the only rags to riches story...Belle could now save her father" (3).

- "These implications are important because of their influence on how young girls behave and form identities based on these lead female roles" (4).

- "Girls are gaining an inaccurate depiction of what they should be, and boys are also learning that this is how girls look and behave" (4).

- "Female-named Hurricanes Kill more than Male Hurricanes..." b/c ppl. don't respect them, study finds"

- "When under the radar, that's when it [the sexism] has the potential to influence our judgments" (1).

- "The stereotypes that underlie these judgments are subtle and not necessarily hostile toward women" (1).

misses irony in deli very

not really already belonged to upper class

Women still as main characters (traditional hero)

Again, lang. assumes that awareness alone solves

entire subj. over-blown?

scientific study far less definitive

"hostile" = naturally aggressive → implicit masculine guilt

article all about (apparently lin.) moral responsibility

stereotypical male traits

Movies just as much of a burden to live up to as female ones

Doesn't discuss neg. male traits

character stereotypical "meat & head" → depict of males much more negative (Gaston = villain)

male attempt to break gender norms → Gus Gus another bumbling male buffoon

COMpletely Ignores Men

→ Only women = important

→ women = intellectual, men = uncivilized animals

→ based on modern "enlightened" society, awareness only seems to give illusion of change

→ modifier actually unclear

→ based on modern "enlightened" society, awareness only seems to give illusion of change

→ what about what girls now expect from men?

→ What about boys learning how boys should look and behave?

→ men only have importance in relation to women

Neg. connotation; judgmental  
↳ Assumption that

"Make" = intention/force  
Man responsible

Characterize as "other" voice/identity  
Eliminate his

"Clueless" Man Claims Territory in North Sudan to (Make) Daughter Princess

Isolates Heaton from norm; crazy, but responsible

- "Most parents would then say, No, you can't. It's just not how things work. Not Heaton. He for some reason said yes, okay. Sure, we'll figure it out" (1). Lack of quotation marks for Heaton v. non-existent

"most parents" invalidate him syntax questions  
sanity; reinforces

"confident" repeatedly suggests male ego/pre-emption to blame  
↳ Nothing to see here—just a man getting some land to give to his daughter. [In Africa] (1).  
↳ Attempt to LIVE Disney fairy tale as resuer/provider — exclusion  
↳ Mocks masculine dominance/patriarchy  
↳ Declaration of sovereignty in an African nation  
↳ Article next discusses failed election → Man rejected foreign & domestic  
↳ Belief in cliché that would be (almost) admirable in women = pathetic/juvenile in men

- "According to Heaton's assessment of the pesky politics in founding his new kingdom, he believes love will conquer all" (2).

↳ Belief in cliché that would be (almost) admirable in women = pathetic/juvenile in men

"The Snow Queen"

emotions = unappealing/weak for boys

Kay learns role/easily influenced → weak w/o emotions

But IQ ≠ EMOTION - "What are you crying for" asked he. "You look so ugly!" (3).

↳ seem mutually exclusive  
↳ Everything that was peculiar and displeasing in them—that Kay knew how to imitate: and at such times all the people said, "The boy is certainly very clever!" (3).

Emotion - "There, in the market-place, some of the boldest of the boys used to tie their sleds to the carts as they passed by, and so they were pulled along, and got a good ride. It was so capital!" (3).  
↳ stereotypical "daring" male behavior  
↳ Society ignores masculine weakness

ultimate good → soul Men as passive passengers  
↳ He then cried as loud as he could, but no one heard him" (4).

Men as visual value appearance/perfection → but helpless/inferior comparatively of natural order  
↳ cf. w/ Gerda's constant crying. Kay's tears are ignore/fruitless  
↳ But time switch = reversal

- "it was on [the moon] that Kay gazed during the long long winter's night, while by day he slept at the feet of the Snow Queen" (4).

moon = symbol of femininity Men should idolize/worship women (implicit inferiority) & subservience  
↳ Kay not in control → men are pigs but lack the self-control to even be held responsible

Gerda's tears repeatedly emphasized as actor Kay helpless  
↳ Gerda = actor/hero → redeemed through pure woman  
↳ emotion = necessary tool

- "But he sat quite still, benumbed and cold. Then little Gerda she burning tears; and they fell on his bosom, they penetrated to his heart, they thawed the lumps of ice, and consumed the splinters of the looking glass; he looked at her, and she sang the hymn" (9).

passive active → Gerda = actor/hero → redeemed through pure woman  
↳ "You are a fine fellow for tramping about," said she to little Kay. "I should like to know, faith, if you deserve that one should run from one end of the world to the other for your sake?" (10).  
↳ assumes Kay is responsible/careless + Kay as real damsel/prize → even then, men judged v. pitied

Question: While objectification and possessive language is often analyzed in fairy tales, attention seems to be exclusively focused on women—is there a double standard in the examination of fairy tale gender stereotypes? Why is it a problem that girls are taught to be princesses, but not that boys are taught to be princes?

Thesis/Answer: While Andersen's "The Snow Queen" seems to use gender to reinforce stereotypical and sexist gender roles, the modern day views exhibited in the various non-fiction articles demonstrate subtle, but potentially more damaging, depictions of gender where women are recognized as pitiable victims, but men are mocked and marginalized for the fairy tale roles they, too, have been taught to play.

Man as unworthy sinner } Significance

\* Note that this is the same thesis format that we used for the Oliver Twist mini-essay.