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A Content Analysis of *Cinderella* Illustrated Storybooks Housed in the de Grummond Collection
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University of Southern Mississippi
Readers: Dr. M.J. Norton
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Abstract
This study screened 71 “Cinderella” illustrated storybook titles housed in the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection and published from 1984-2004 for specific expressions of the animal helper theme—identified as “common incidents” by the sourcebook, *Cinderella: Three Hundred and Forty-five Variants*. The study sorted and classified the “Cinderella” illustrated storybook titles into three major groups—Tradition, Multicultural, and Alternative—and further classified the Multicultural storybooks as African-American, Anglo-American, Asian, European, Latino, Middle Eastern, and Asian. It determined which of these storybooks most commonly made use of the animal helper theme variant. The results of the study revealed that the “Cinderella” illustrated storybook titles classified as both Asian and Multicultural most commonly made use of the animal helper theme variant.

Introduction
General Background
Bruno Bettelheim once stated that “‘Cinderella’ [was] perhaps the best-known fairy tale, and probably the best liked” (Bettelheim, 1976, p. 236). Elements of the 4,000-year-old story were traced to Asia, India, Africa, the Middle East, Europe, and North America. Scholars and folklorists identified over 500 different European versions of “Cinderella,” such as the well-known “Cendrillon,” “Aschenputtel,” and “Cinderella, or the Little Glass Slipper;” and the lesser-known “La Gatta Cenerentola,” “Donkey Skin,” “Finnette Cendron,” “Allerleirauch,” “One-Eye, Two-Eyes, Three-Eyes,” “Rashen Coatie,” “Vasilisa the Beautiful,” and “Burenushka, the Little Red Cow.”

The common themes found in the world’s “Cinderella” stories suggest that “Cinderella” has filled some type of deep psychological need in humanity. Certain themes may have been expressed differently—or altogether forgotten—by certain cultures; but a number of themes have remained solidly intact, such as the mother-daughter relationship, the girl’s relationship with the rest of her family, the girl’s continued relationship with her true mother through her animal helper, and the tiny delicate shoe that could only be worn by the girl.

Purpose
This study examined expressions of the animal helper theme found in traditional, multicultural, and alternative “Cinderella” illustrated storybooks housed in the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection and published from 1984-2004. It sought to contribute to a greater understanding of the “Cinderella” story.

Guiding Questions

1) What was the role of the animal helper in “Cinderella?”

2) What were the specific variants of the animal helper theme in “Cinderella?”

3) Which specific variants of the animal helper theme were expressed in “Cinderella?”

4) Was the animal helper theme expressed more commonly in traditional, multicultural, or alternative versions of “Cinderella?”

Definitions
Animal helper—an animal character that played an active role in the story as the girl’s helper through the performance of tasks, and the provision of food, clothing, and companionship
Animal witness—an animal helper that revealed the girl’s true location to the prince

Content analysis—a type of qualitative study which identifies and categorizes related themes

Eating taboo—the act of eating the animal helper, usually performed by the stepmother

Qualitative study—a method of study that questions and describes related phenomenon or themes

Revivified bones—the resurrection or transformation of the animal helper’s bones

Slaying of helpful animal—the act of killing the animal helper, usually performed by the stepmother

Task-performing animal—an animal helper that assists the girl by performing a series of tasks, usually given by the stepmother

Delimitations/Limitations

The de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection housed a variety of “Cinderella” publications, which included illustrated storybooks. This qualitative study was limited to “Cinderella” illustrated storybooks housed in the de Grummond Collection and published from 1984-2004. It focused on expressions of the animal helper theme found in “Cinderella” illustrated storybooks housed in the de Grummond Collection and published from 1984-2004.

Assumptions

This study assumed that the “Cinderella” literature listed in the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection represented the body of literature as a whole. This study also assumed that the “Cinderella” literature housed in the de Grummond Collection was entirely and completely indexed.

Importance

“Cinderella” could be described as a very old fairy tale that deeply touched the heart and soul of mankind—or perhaps one should say “womankind,” because of the female conflict found within the story.

Certain elements—especially “[t]he unrivaled tiny foot size as a mark of extraordinary virtue, distinction, and beauty, and the slipper made of precious material”—suggested an Asian origin (Bettelheim, 1976: 236). This study achieved a greater understanding of “Cinderella” and contributed to the considerable body of knowledge of the subject.

Review of Related Literature

**Cinderella**

In *Cinderella: Three Hundred and Forty-five Variants*, Marian Roalfe Cox identified three major types of “Cinderella” stories: “A.—*Cinderella*; B—*Catskin*; and C—*Cap o’Rushes*” (Cox, 1893: xxv-xxvi). Cox also provided an alphabetized list of themes, or “incidents common to the Cinderella variants,” which included: “Aid (various); Animal witness; Counter-tasks; Dead (or transformed) mother help; Eating taboo; False bride; Happy marriage; Hearth abode; Help at grave; Helpful animal; Heroine disguise; Heroine flight; Ill-treated heroine; Lost shoe; Lovesick prince; Magic dresses; Marriage tests; Meeting-place; Menial heroine; Mutilated feet; Outcast heroine; Pitch trap; Recognition by means of shoe or ring; Recognition food; Revivified bones; Shoe marriage test; Slaying of helpful animal; Substituted bride; Tasks; Task-performing animal; Threefold flight; and Villain nemesis” (Cox, 1893, p. xxv - xxvi).

Cox (1893) revealed that “Cinderella” stories shared common themes—the absent mother; the wicked stepmother; the neglectful father; the young girl who was at the mercy of her cruel family; the helpful fairy godmother; the animal or treasure tree that provided the girl with food, clothes, and comfort; and the tiny, exquisite shoe that only fit the true bride. An examination of these themes uncovered dark, complex, and intense family relationships—perhaps most notably a mother-daughter bond so strong that it could not be broken even by death.

The bond between mother and daughter was so powerful in many “Cinderella” stories—such as “Aschenputtel,” “Rashen Coatie,” “Vasilisa the
Beautiful,” “The Korean Cinderella,” “The Golden Slipper,” and “Burenushka, the Little Red Cow”—that the dead mother’s soul reincarnated into an animal, plant, or doll in order to provide her daughter with the food, clothes, and comfort the rest of the family denied her. The mother-as-animal-helper theme was common in “Cinderella” stories, and there were four major expressions of this theme:

(1) an animal which [was] bequeathed by a dying mother; (2) the dead mother who [emerged] from the grave as herself, an angel, or as a bird; (3) the mother who [remained] in her grave but [offered] advice to the girl, usually to seek the help of a certain animal; or (4) the mother who [disappeared] from the tale altogether and an animal [helped] the girl quite spontaneously (Schlepp, 2002, p. 136).

An intense combination of the mother-daughter relationship theme and the animal-as-helper theme was found in “Aschenputtel,” the well-known Grimm’s version of “Cinderella.” As Aschenputtel’s mother lay near death, she comforted her daughter and told her to be good and pious, because she would always watch over her and protect her from heaven. Aschenputtel visited her mother’s grave every day and wept over it. She worked and slept in the hearth among the ashes. Bettelheim once identified the hearth as “the center of the home,” and “a symbol for the mother” (Bettelheim, 1976, p. 248). Bettelheim also stated that “to live so close to [the hearth] that one [dwelt] among the ashes may then symbolize an effort atholding on to, or returning to, the mother and what she [represented]” (Bettelheim, 1976, p. 248). Freud, Bettelheim, Zipes, and Hohr all recognized Aschenputtel’s servitude as “the work of mourning” (Hohr, 2000, p. 95). Job rent his garments and smeared himself with ash to mourn the deaths of his beloved children. Aschenputtel mourned her mother’s death in a similar fashion by denying herself comfort and sleeping among the ashes. Aschenputtel’s primary dilemma stemmed not from her abusive stepmother and stepsisters, but from her attempt to “overcome grief and get on with [her] life” (Hohr, 2000, p. 95).

Aschenputtel planted a hazel twig on her mother’s grave and watered it with her tears. The twig grew into a treasure tree, and became the medium which enabled the late mother “to grant [her daughter] the qualities of a mature and sexually attractive woman” (Hohr, 2000, p. 95). The animal helpers that appeared in “Aschenputtel” were doves that lived in the treasure tree—who perhaps served as agents to the ghost mother—and assisted Aschenputtel by picking peas out of the ashes. They warned the prince twice as he rode past the hazel tree with false brides, and served as witnesses to confirm that Aschenputtel was his true bride. The same doves passed judgment upon the stepsisters by pecking out their eyes as they entered the church on the day of Aschenputtel’s wedding.

In other versions, such as “Rashen Coatie,” “One-Eye, Two-Eyes, Three-Eyes,” “Vasilisa the Beautiful,” “Burenushka, the Little Red Cow,” and “Yeh-Shen, the Chinese Cinderella,” the stepmother killed the animal helper—which magically continued to supply the girl with food, clothes, and companionship after its death. In “Yeh-Shen, the Chinese Cinderella,” the bones of the magical red-and-gold fish provided Yeh-Shen with beautiful clothes, a robe of kingfisher feathers, and dainty gold shoes to wear to a festival that her stepmother and half-sister would not let her attend. She was thought to be a princess at the festival, but she fled for home when she saw her stepmother and half-sister. She lost one of her gold shoes in her haste to leave the festival. The merchant who found the shoe sold it to a smitten prince who began a massive search to locate the woman who could wear the tiny shoe.

The animal helper in a Tibetan version of “Cinderella” was a mother who reincarnated as a cow to feed her daughter and protect her from her ogress stepmother. The ogress became suspicious after she noticed that the girl—whom she starved—was as healthy as her own daughter—whom she fed sugar and milk and butter. The ogress learned of the
magical cow and planned to slaughter it. The cow told the girl, “today those two are going to kill me; after the killing is done...[a]sk for the skin of the four legs and some parts of the intestines...whatever [the ogress] gives you, wrap it in the skin and bury it beneath the door sill” (Schlepp, 2002: 127). The girl did as she was instructed, and when she recovered the items from beneath the door sill, she discovered that “the skin had become clothing, and two of the hooves had become boots, and the intestines had become gold and jade” (Schlepp, 2002: 127). The girl adorned herself in this finery, attended a fair, and caught the eye of a young king.

“Burenushka, the Little Red Cow,” also featured a mother who reincarnated as a cow to feed and care for her daughter. In this Russian version of “Cinderella,” Princess Maria was charged with taking Burenushka, the little red cow, to pasture with only a hard crust of bread to eat for the day. Burenushka provided Princess Maria with milk and fine clothes so she could “walk around, all day long, dressed like a lady” (Afanas’ev, 1973, p. 146). Princess Maria’s stepmother learned of Burenushka’s magical abilities from her three-eyed daughter, and ordered her husband to slaughter the cow. Princess Maria asked her father for the entrails, which she nailed to the gatepost. A berry-covered bush filled with exotic song birds sprang up from the spot. Prince Ivan visited the family, and informed the stepmother that he would marry the maiden who could fill his bowl with berries from the bush. The stepmother’s own daughters failed miserably, but Princess Maria was successful and married Prince Ivan (Afanas’ev, 1973).

Schlepp stated that “the merging of the dead mother with a helpful animal [was] a complication for most folklorists and has been the subject of considerable discussion and puzzlement” (2002, p. 136). He questioned why the mother should “suffer another reincarnation merely to help an innocent in dire straits, because the soul of an innocent [was secured]” (2002, p. 138). Schlepp researched Asian and Middle Eastern versions of “Cinderella” to answer his questions, and discovered that many of them contained a black element usually eliminated from European versions—matricide.

Schlepp related an Iranian version of “Cinderella” called “Stirnmondlein,” and a very similar Iraqi version of “Cinderella” called “Little Fatima,” in which a young girl,

... who [was] blessed with a shining moon on her brow and a star on her chin...[was] deluded by an evil school mistress who [wanted] to marry her father. The school mistress [made] dolls for all the children in the school except her; when the girl [asked] why she was given no doll, the school mistress [said] that only if she [killed] her mother [would] she get one like the others. The school mistress [instructed] the girl to drown her mother in a vat of vinegar, which she [did] (Schlepp, 2002, pp. 134, 144).

Afterward, the school mistress married the girl’s father and made the girl her slave. In “Little Fatima,” the girl’s mother “[turned] into a yellow cow and [came] out of the vinegar jar to help her daughter by producing needed things from her horns” (Schlepp, 2002, p. 137).

Schlepp’s primary study was a Tibetan version of “Cinderella.” In this version, the girl lived with her mother near a family of ogres who wanted to eat the girl’s mother. The ogres enticed the girl to kill her mother with a millstone, and enslaved the girl after they devoured her mother’s body. The girl’s mother reincarnated as a cow that provided the girl with food. The ogres killed the cow, and the girl preserved part of the cow’s body. The girl’s mother reincarnated again as a dove to help her perform the impossible tasks given by the ogres. The cow’s skin, bones, and intestines transformed into beautiful clothes and shoes for the girl to wear to a festival. The girl married a prince, gave birth to a son, and was visited by the ogre’s daughter. The ogre’s daughter drowned the girl and took her place as the prince’s wife. The girl reincarnated as a bird, appeared before the prince and his men, and revealed the presence of
the false bride. A wise goddess/fairy godmother transformed the bird back into the girl, the prince executed the false bride, and the redeemed girl reclaimed her rightful position as the prince’s wife (Schlepp, 2002, pp. 125-133).

Schlepp’s study additionally revealed the likely origin of Cinderella’s fairy godmother:

In contrast to the anonymity of the godmother in European versions, in Tibet and Mongolia the wise goddess [was] in fact the mother, who achieved this status through consenting to be reborn in a lower form of life expressly to help her daughter who was the very agent of her death. The girl, on the other hand, [was] not even named, and her marriage to the king, which [was] in the West the much anticipated climax, [was] seen in this narrative only as one event among others, and [was], more significantly, owing not to her own qualities but to the efforts of her mother (2002, p. 136).

Schlepp commented that certain cultural settings “delete…the matricide, which [suggested] that those stories that [retained] it [were] from an older stratum” (2002, p. 134). In many Western versions of “Cinderella,” there

... [appeared] to be no reason for the girl’s plight, except the meanness of her stepmother and stepsisters, who [were] not ogres of unmitigated evil, but merely nasty people. The outcome of the story [turned] from retribution for committing a heinous act to justice gained for innocent suffering, which [brought] the primary focus of the story upon the girl herself (Schlepp, 2002, p. 134).

Kakar’s method of research was a content analysis with the coding unit being an incident of aggression.

Each instance [was] coded under three main categories: (a) type of aggression, (b) instrument of aggression, and (c) relationship between the characters. Each category [was] divided into further subcategories, the whole methodological framework being an extension and modification of studies carried out earlier by Slater and Stephens (Kakar, 1975, p. 293).

Kakar’s research revealed more instances of same-sex aggression than cross-sex aggression in traditional Indian folktales. It also revealed that instances of sibling rivalry in traditional Indian folktales were low and that parents initiated most acts of aggression in traditional Indian folktales. Kakar’s study indicated that acts of same-sex aggression in traditional Indian folktales were more virulent than acts of cross-sex aggression (1975, p. 294).

McDonald’s study focused upon “sex bias in the representation of male and female characters in children’s picture books” (1988, p. 389). McDonald recognized that “[a]s early as 3 years of age, children correctly [associated] sex-typed objects, such as articles of clothing, with the appropriate sex” (1988, p. 390). McDonald stated that “Williams, Bennett, and Best (1975) found that kindergarten children had an appreciable degree of knowledge of adult sex stereotypes and that such knowledge increased through the second-grade level and then remained constant for the next two years” (1988, p. 390). McDonald additionally stated: “Williams et. al. also found that male stereotypes were learned at an earlier age than female stereotypes and that it was more appropriate for girls to adopt aspects of both male and female roles (the ‘tomboy’) than it was for boys to adopt behavior classified as feminine (the ‘sissy’)” (1988, p. 390).
McDonald (1988, p. 392) recognized that:

[O]f 100 children’s picture books published between 1972 and 1974, only 68 included women in some role, and 68% of those roles were that of the homemaker (Stewig & Knipfel, 1975). Of the remaining professional roles, the most prevalent female occupation was that of teacher, another stereotypical role. Men were portrayed more frequently, were more active, and were presented in a wider array of professional roles than women; they rarely performed household tasks. Finally, frequent derogatory remarks about female roles have been found in children’s textbooks” (Marten & Matlin, 1976).

McDonald’s study was a content analysis “to determine whether treatment of the sexes had improved in children’s picture books between 1976 and 1987” (1988, p. 392). McDonald’s study was limited to 41 “picture [story] books meant for preschoolers, kindergarteners, or children just learning to read” published from 1976-1987 (1988, p. 393).

McDonald stated,

[T]he content analysis section was divided into six categories, in which parental support, helping behavior, stereotypical behavior roles, play behavior, character status, and illustrations were evaluated. Each character was identified as either an adult or child; as male, or female, or neuter; as human or non-human; and as Caucasian or minority (if applicable). Any character that could not be identified as either male or female was defined as neuter, and animal characters, with or without human-like personalities, and inanimate objects with human-like personalities were classified as non-humans. A non-human could be identified as either male or female through dress or pronoun references (1988, p. 394).

[A]nother section of the rating form was used to record a story’s stereotypical behavior roles. Examples of such roles [were] male mechanics, policemen, businessmen, female waitresses, homemakers, and old maids. Examples of non-stereotyped or progressive roles [were] househusbands, male nurses, male teachers, or businesswomen, female doctors, and female politicians. A female character could only be labeled as a housewife or a homemaker only if she was shown to stay home throughout the day and performed household chores with no indication of outside employment. After a character was identified in a particular role, he or she was [classified] as either passive or active. Active characters showed independence, leadership, and initiative, whereas passive characters were dependent, followed orders, and relied on the assistance of others (1988, p. 394).

McDonald added that “[w]hether or not a stereotypical role [was] biased [depended] upon the era in which the story [took] place,” and that “a stereotypical role was considered biased only if it was presented in a book about the present” (1988, p. 395). McDonald classified historical characters in historical storybooks “in context” because “opportunities and expectations for the sexes have changed considerably since the women’s movement began” (1988, p. 395).

McDonald revealed that “picture books did not improve in their treatment of the sexes between 1975 and 1987” (1988, p. 397). McDonald stated that “[w]omen [continued] to be portrayed as teachers, old maids, housewives, and princesses in children’s stories, and men [were] still placed in such roles as king, villain, wise-men, and shepherder or farmer” (1988, p. 397). McDonald’s study stressed a need for non-gender biased literature for children.

Nikolajeva and Scott’s study was a content analysis of “the aspects of word/image interaction in picture books” (2000, p. 225). They focused upon thirteen
Nikolajeva and Scott identified two types of word/image interaction in the picture books they studied: symmetrical interaction, and enhancing interaction. They discovered that “[i]n symmetrical interaction, words and pictures [told] the same story [and] essentially repeated information in different forms of communication” (2000, p. 225). They also discovered that “[i]n enhancing interaction, pictures [amplified] more fully the meaning of the words, or the words [expanded] the picture so that different information in the two modes of communication [produced] a more complex dynamic” (2000, 225).

Nikolajeva and Scott acknowledged the usefulness of these terms when they “[analyzed] the ways picture books [presented] such features as setting, characterization, point of view, and the specific way word/image interaction [worked or failed to work] when these aspects of narrative [were expressed]” (2000, p. 226). Nikolajeva and Scott identified some picture books as “predominately verbal, [with] pictures usually subordinate to the words” (2000, p. 227). They identified other picture books as “enhancing, or complimentary, with words and pictures that [supported] one another [with] additional information that the other [lacked]” (2000, p. 229). They also identified picture books that “[had] words and images that [came] close to filling each other’s gaps, [and gave the reader] a passive role, because little [was] left to the reader’s imagination” (2000, p. 232).

Nikolajeva and Scott recognized the significance of picture books in their study, and acknowledged that picture books can influence both adult and child audiences. They called for studies on the pedagogical and cognitive aspects of picture books, as well as for additional studies on the word/picture aspects of picture books (2000, p. 238).

These studies revealed how researchers used content analysis to identify literary themes. This study used content analysis, and determined how the animal helper theme was expressed in multicultural, alternative, and traditional versions of “Cinderella” illustrated storybooks housed the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection and published from 1984-2004.

**Overview of the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection**

*The de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection*

The de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection—located in Hattiesburg at the University of Southern Mississippi—was established in 1966 by Dr. Lena de Grummond. It was established to focus upon classic and contemporary children’s literature from the United States and the United Kingdom. The collection “consists of original manuscripts and illustrations created by more than 1200 authors and illustrators of children’s and young adult literature” (Jones, 1999, n.p.). It included “more than 55,000 books dating from 1530” (Jones, 1999, n.p.). The de Grummond Collection was available online at http://www.lib.usm.edu/~degrum.

*“The Cinderella Project”*

“The Cinderella Project” was:

… a text and image archive containing a dozen versions of the fairy tale, [such as] some of the common varieties of the tale form the English-speaking word in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries [from] the de Grummond Children’s Literature Research Collection at the University of Southern Mississippi (http://www.usm.edu/english/fairytales/cinderella/cinderella.html, 1999, n.p.).

Visitors to the Web site viewed the documents horizontally, vertically, and with—or without—text descriptions. The Cinderella Project resulted from a joint effort between the USM English department and the de Grummond Collection. Associate
Professor of English Michael Salda and a team of 23 English graduate students, assisted by Dee Jones, were responsible for “[t]he transcriptions, HTML coding, and digital images” (http://www.usm.edu/english/fairytales/cinderella/cinderella.html), 1999, n.p.).

Methodology
Type of Research Design

This study consulted Cinderella: Three Hundred and Forty-five Variants as a sourcebook for specific expressions of the animal helper theme—identified as “common incidents” (Cox, 1893, p. xxv). The “Cinderella” illustrated storybooks housed in the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection and published from 1984-2004 were screened for the presence of animal helper theme variants identified by the sourcebook.

The “Cinderella” illustrated storybooks were sorted and classified into three groups—Traditional, Multicultural, and Alternative. It also determined which of the Traditional, Multicultural, or Alternative storybooks made use of the animal helper theme variants listed by the sourcebook.

Selection/Description of Subject

Cinderella: Three Hundred and Forty-five Variants identified 38 themes, or “common incidents,” universal to the “Cinderella” story (Cox, 1893, p. xxvi). The illustrated storybooks used in this study often contained at least 22 of these “common incidents,” or themes: an “ill-treated” and “menial” heroine was enslaved by her stepmother and confined to her “hearth abode.” The girl longed to take part in a celebration, but her stepmother would not allow her to attend it until she had finished a series of “tasks” The girl often completed the “tasks” with the “aid” of a “task-performing animal” (Cox, 1893, p. xxvi).

In spite of the finished “tasks,” the stepmother still refused to let the girl attend the celebration. The girl received “aid” and “magic dresses” from a “helpful animal,” a fairy godmother, or from the “grave” of her “transformed mother.” The girl attended the celebration in “disguise,” and was not recognized by her stepmother. The celebration usually served as the “meeting place” for the girl and her “lovesick prince” (Cox, 1893, p. xxvi).

The girl lost a shoe in her “flight” from the celebration, and the prince arranged a “marriage test” for the owner of the “lost shoe.” An “animal witness” sometimes revealed the girl’s true location to the prince. The failed attempts of the girl’s stepsisters to pass the “shoe marriage test” occasionally resulted in “mutilated feet.” The girl received instant “recognition by means of [the] shoe” (Cox, 1893, p. xxvi).

The illustrated storybooks used in this study usually concluded with a “happy marriage” between the girl and the prince. A few of the illustrated storybooks used in this study included a “villain nemesis” in which the girl’s tormentors were punished with exile, blindness, or death (Cox, 1893, p. xxvi).

Content Analysis

The ANNA database (http://anna.lib.usm.edu) provided the catalogue numbers, authors, publication dates, physical descriptions, story abstracts, subject terms, and genre indexes for titles housed in The University of Southern Mississippi’s library systems. An ANNA search revealed that the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection housed over 278 items related to the topic of “Cinderella.” These items included coloring and activity books, rebus puzzles, anthologies, educational materials, children’s and young adult novels, sticker books, board books, paper dolls, toy and movable books, and illustrated storybooks.

Only “Cinderella” illustrated storybooks that were housed in the de Grummond Collection and published from 1984-2004 were considered for this study. Coloring and activity books, rebus puzzles, anthologies, educational materials, children’s and young adult novels, sticker books, board books, paper dolls, toy and movable books, and illustrated storybooks housed in other collections were excluded from this study. Illustrated storybooks housed in the
The “Cinderella” illustrated storybooks used in this study were sorted and classified into three groups: Traditional, Multicultural, and Alternative. Traditional referred to the familiar Perrault versions of “Cinderella.” Multicultural referred to ethnic “Cinderella-type” myths, legends, and folktales; or to retellings of the familiar Perrault version that used ethnic characters. Alternative referred to “Cinderella” parodies, non-traditional retellings, and retellings that used anthropomorphic characters.

After the storybooks had been sorted and classified, they were read and screened for the appearance of specific themes, or “common incidents,” listed in Cinderella: Three Hundred and Forty-five Variants: “Aid (various); Animal witness; Dead (or transformed) mother help; Eating taboo; False bride; Happy marriage; Hearth abode; Help at grave; Helpful animal; Heroine disguise; Heroine flight; Ill-treated heroine; Lost shoe; Lovesick prince; Magic dresses; Marriage tests; Meeting-place; Menial heroine; Mutilated feet; Outcast heroine; Pitch trap; Recognition by means of shoe or ring; Recognition food; Revivified bones; Shoe marriage test; Substituted bride; Tasks; Task-performing animal; Threefold flight; Token objects; and Villain nemesis” (Cox, 1893, p. xxv - xxvi).

The storybooks were screened a second time for the appearance of animal helpers. An animal helper was defined as an animal character which played an active role in the story as the girl’s helper through the performance of tasks, and the provision of advice, food, clothing, and companionship. The animal helper performed any or all of these services for the girl. The animal helper could actively shape the girl’s fate, like the white bird in Ruth Sanderson’s version of Cinderella, or it could spontaneously perform a single action intended to benefit the girl, like the hawk in The Egyptian Cinderella. Anthropomorphic characters in anthropomorphic retellings, such as the penguin fairy godmother in Cinderella Penguin, Or the Little Glass Flipper, were not considered animal helpers. The animals transformed into matched horses, coachmen, and footmen by fairy godmothers in traditional Perrault versions were not considered animal helpers.

The storybooks were screened a third time for the appearance of six animal helper variants listed in Cinderella: Three Hundred and Forty-five Variants: “Animal witness; Eating taboo; Helpful animal; Revivified bones; Slaying of animal helper; and Task-performing animal” (Cox, 1893: xxvi). The “animal witness” exposed the stepmother’s deception, and revealed the girl’s true location to the prince. The “eating taboo” was broken if the girl’s stepmother or stepsisters ate the animal helper. The “helpful animal” provided the girl with food, clothing, advice, and friendship. “Revivified bones” referred to the transformation or resurrection of the slain animal helper. The “slaying of [the] helpful animal” occurred after the stepmother discovered the animal helper as the source of the girl’s comfort. The “task-performing animal” completed the impossible tasks the girl’s stepmother gave her (Cox, 1893, p. xxv).

The data were collected, organized, and recorded into Microsoft Word tables: Traditional, Multicultural, and Alternative. The Multicultural table was subdivided into the following tables: African-American, Anglo-American, Asian, Middle Eastern, European, Latino, and Native American.

Findings

Overview

This study screened 71 “Cinderella” illustrated storybook titles housed in the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection and published from 1984-2004. These storybooks were sorted and classified into three groups: Traditional, Multicultural, and Alternative. The storybooks classified as Multicultural were further sorted and classified into seven groups: African-American, Anglo-American, Asian, European, Latino, Middle Eastern, and Native American.

Of the 71 titles, 21 “Cinderella” illustrated storybook titles housed in the de Grummond Collection and
published from 1984-2004 were classified as *Traditional*. Four titles contained some variant of the animal helper theme (See Table 1).

Thirty-four of the 71 “Cinderella” illustrated storybook titles housed in the de Grummond Collection and published from 1984-2004 were classified as *Multicultural*. Nineteen of these 34 titles contained some variant of the animal helper theme. One was *African-American*, two were *Anglo-American*, eleven were *Asian*, two were *Latino*, two were *Middle Eastern*, and one was *Native American* (See Tables 2a-2g).

Sixteen of the 71 “Cinderella” illustrated storybook titles housed in the de Grummond Collection and published from 1984-2004 were classified as *Alternative*. One title contained some variant of the animal helper theme (See Table 3).

*Traditional “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks*

Twenty-one “Cinderella” illustrated storybook titles housed in the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection and published from 1984-2004 were classified as *Traditional*. Four titles contained two variants of the animal helper theme: “helpful animal” and “task-performing animal.” The “helpful animal” variant was found in four titles. The “task-performing animal” variant was found in one title (See Table 1).

*Multicultural “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks*

Thirty-four “Cinderella” storybook titles housed in the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection and published from 1984-2004 were classified as *Multicultural*. The 34 titles were classified and sorted into seven tables: African-American, Anglo-American, Asian, European, Latino, Middle Eastern, and Native American.

Nineteen titles contained at least one out of six animal helper theme variants: “animal witness; eating taboo; helpful animal; revivified bones; slaying of helpful animal; and task-performing animal.” The “animal witness” variant was found in four titles; the “eating taboo” variant was found in three titles; the “helpful animal” variant was found in 18 titles; the “revivified bones” variant was found in four titles; the “slaying of helpful animal” variant was found in four titles; and the “task-performing animal” variant was found in seven titles (See Tables 2a-2g).

*African-American “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks*

Two “Cinderella” storybook titles housed in the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection and published from 1984-2004 were classified as *African-American*. One title contained one variant of the animal helper theme: “helpful animal” (See Table 2a).

*Anglo-American “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks*

Three “Cinderella” storybook titles housed in the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection and published from 1984-2004 were classified as *Anglo-American*. Two titles contained one variant of the animal helper theme: “helpful animal” (See Table 2b).

*Asian “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks*

Eleven “Cinderella” storybook titles housed in the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection and published from 1984-2004 were classified as *Asian*. Eleven titles contained at least one out of six animal helper theme variants: “animal witness; eating taboo; helpful animal; revivified bones; slaying of the animal helper; and task-performing animal.” The “animal witness” variant was found in one title; the “eating taboo” variant was found in three titles; the “helpful animal” variant was found in 11 titles; the “revivified bones” variant was found in four titles; the “slaying of helpful animal” variant was found in four titles; and the “task-performing animal” variant was found in six titles (See Table 2c).

*European “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks*

Five “Cinderella” storybook titles housed in the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection and published from 1984-2004 were classified as *European*. None of the animal helper theme variants appeared in any of these titles (See Table 2d).

*Latino “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks*
Six “Cinderella” storybook titles housed in the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection and published from 1984-2004 were classified as Latino. Two titles contained three variants of the animal helper theme: “animal witness; helpful animal; and task-performing animal.” The “animal witness” variant was found in two titles; the “helpful animal” variant was found in one title; and the “task-performing animal” variant was found in one title (See Table 2e).

Middle Eastern “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks
Three “Cinderella” storybook titles housed in the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection and published from 1984-2004 were classified as Middle-Eastern. Two titles contained two variants of the animal helper theme: “animal witness” and “helpful animal.” The “animal witness” variant was found in one title. The “helpful animal” variant was found in two titles (See Table 2f).

Native-American “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks
Four “Cinderella” storybook titles housed in the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection and published from 1984-2004 were classified as Native-American. One title contained one variant of the animal helper theme: “helpful animal” (See Table 2g).

Alternative “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks
Sixteen “Cinderella” storybook titles housed in the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection and published from 1984-2004 were classified as Alternative. One title contained one variant of the animal helper theme: “helpful animal” (See Table 3).

Additional Findings
The de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection housed 34 Multicultural “Cinderella” illustrated storybook titles published from 1984-2004 with some variant of the animal helper theme—which outnumbered the de Grummond Collection’s 21 Traditional and 16 Alternative “Cinderella” illustrated storybook titles with some variant of the animal helper theme. Nineteen Multicultural titles contained some variant of the animal helper theme—which outnumbered the four Traditional titles and one Alternative title that contained some variant of the animal helper theme. Eleven of the 19 Multicultural titles were classified as Asian—which outnumbered the one title classified as African-American; the two titles classified as Anglo-American; the two titles classified as Latino; the two titles classified as Middle Eastern; and the one title classified as Native American.

Conclusions
Thirty-four of the 71 titles used in this study were classified as Multicultural. Nineteen of the 34 titles classified as Multicultural contained some variant of the animal helper theme. Eleven of the 34 Multicultural titles were classified by the study as Asian. All eleven Multicultural titles classified as Asian contained some variant of the animal helper theme. Five of the 34 Multicultural titles were classified by the study as European. None of the five Multicultural titles classified as European contained any variant of the animal helper theme. Twenty-one of the 71 titles used in this study were classified as Traditional. Four of the 21 titles classified as Traditional contained some variant of the animal helper theme. Sixteen of the 71 titles used in this study were classified as Alternative. One of the 16 titles classified as Alternative contained some variant of the animal helper theme.

The majority of the titles that contained some variant of the animal helper theme were classified as Multicultural. The majority of Multicultural titles that contained some variant of the animal helper theme were also classified as Asian. The titles classified as Alternative contained the fewest variants of the animal helper theme. The most common animal helper theme variant was the “helpful animal” variant—which appeared in 23 titles. The least common animal helper theme variant was the “eating taboo” variant—which appeared in three titles.

Discussion
Illustrated storybook themes were often influenced
by cultural mores and proper identification of illustrated storybook themes helped librarians, educators, and researchers understand illustrated storybooks. Identification of illustrated storybook themes helped librarians, educators, and researchers recognize the potential of illustrated storybooks as educational media in classrooms and libraries.

This study could be of use to librarians, educators, and researchers involved in the maintenance of school library media centers because it provided practical information about specific theme variants commonly found in “Cinderella” illustrated storybooks. It also provided a framework for librarians, educators, and researchers to utilize in similar research patterns. The methods used in this study could be easily applied to a search for common themes in the other illustrated storybook titles housed in the de Grummond Children’s Literature Collection, as well as to the illustrated storybook titles housed in other collections on the USM campus and abroad.

Table 1. Traditional “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks, 1984-2004

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**Table 2a. Multicultural African-American “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks**
Table 2b. Multicultural Anglo-American “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks, 1984-2004

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Table 2c. Multicultural Asian “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks, 1984-2004

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Table 2d. Multicultural European “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks, 1984-2004
Table 2e. Multicultural Latino “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks, 1984-2004

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Table 2f. Multicultural Middle Eastern “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks, 1984-2004

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Table 2g. Multicultural Native American “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks, 1984-2004

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Table 3. Alternative “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks, 1984-2004

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References


Additional Reading


Appendix

Cinderella Bibliography

- Traditional “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks, 1984-2004


- *Multicultural African-American “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks, 1984-2004*


- *Multicultural Anglo-American “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks, 1984-2004*


- *Multicultural Asian “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks, 1984-2004*


- **Multicultural European “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks, 1984-2004**


- **Multicultural Latino “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks, 1984-2004**


- *Multicultural Middle Eastern “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks, 1984-2004*


- *Multicultural Native American “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks, 1984-2004*


- *Alternative “Cinderella” Illustrated Storybooks, 1984-2004*


