Though trauma in children’s literature has been thoroughly explored by various scholars, little has been written about the recovery process for victims of abuse. In considering the groundbreaking work of trauma specialist Judith Herman, this paper explores the ways in which recovery from traumatic sexual abuse is handled in realistic young adult novels. The paper finds that while authors often depict immediate trauma accurately, they do not fully explore the healing process of their characters. This disregard for the healing process can be pinpointed to one underlying cause: the influence of fairy tales on young adult texts. A study of Little Red Cap and Snow White by the Brothers Grimm examines the overlapping themes of female silencing and patriarchal control found in both fairy tales and realistic young adult novels of sexual abuse.

References to fairy tales abound in young adult novels that deal with rape and incest. In Cynthia Voight’s When She Hollers, Tish compares herself to the mother in Rumpelstiltskin:

Tish thought, if she had to go on feeling helpless and hopeless, she’d rather be dead. She thought, in the story, it was a hunter who followed the little man and discovered his name, so the queen could save her child. The queen couldn’t even save her own child, there had to be a hunter who felt sorry for her because she was sad and beautiful. [...] She thought, all those men, and the queen could only sit there among them, keeping her secrets from everyone; she couldn’t do anything, just what they made her, or let her. (155)

Tish identifies with the queen’s feelings of helplessness. She herself feels helpless in response to her stepfather’s sexual abuse. Like Tish, Tara, the main character of Anne Provoost’s My Aunt is a Pilot Whale, also compares herself with fairy tale figures. Tara’s cousin discovers a book of fairy tales that Tara has altered:

In elegant letters it said LITTLE RED RIDING HOOD. The next page
Tara rewrites Little Red Riding Hood into a fairy tale in which the main character's silence is expressed visually. Tara is silenced through her father's threats of violence and her mother's suicide upon discovery of her daughter's incest. These examples suggest that the victims of rape and incest in young adult literature often struggle to define their experience within the world of fairy tales.

It should come as no surprise that young adult novels allude to fairy tale characters and plots. In her book, *American Young Adult Novels and Their European Fairy Tale Motifs*, Lucia Huang argues, "Although fairy tales are mostly told to children, they are actually stories about adolescents" (13). In making connections between fairy tale motifs and their young adult counterparts, Huang discovers that adolescent writers and readers use the familiar motifs as a way to explore mature issues new to adolescents.

Not only have fairy tales been used in young adult literature to make difficult situations more easily understandable, but they have also been used in practices of psychology and psychotherapy. Perhaps the most famous book about the necessity for fairy tales in childhood development is Bruno Bettelheim's *The Uses of Enchantment*. In his book, Bettelheim argues:

The fairy tale proceeds in a manner which conforms to the way a child thinks and experiences the world; this is why the fairy tale is so convincing to him. He can gain much better solace from a fairy tale than he can from an effort to comfort him based on adult reasoning and viewpoints. A child trusts what the fairy story tells, because its world accords with his own (45).

Bettelheim believes that the simplistic plots and easily identifiable heroes and villains of fairy tales help to bridge the gap between children’s internal struggles and external behaviour (65). Though Bettelheim's beliefs and reputation have been criticized of late, his argument has been furthered by many psychologists and literary critics, including Simon A. Grolick. In "Fairytales and Psychotherapy," Grolick finds that fairy tales can create transformation in the status of victims:

If the specific fairy tale becomes a transitional object [...], then there is a
greater tendency to retain it inside and feel comforted when it is being re-enacted in life — where it becomes a kind of script creating a drama that is unconsciously being played out by the individual. On another level, the general function of the telling of fairy tales can be internalized (209).

Knowing that their situation mirrors the fairy tales they have read and internalized can provide victims with a language in which to understand their experience.

While fairy tales can be useful as transitional stories, problems arise when referencing fairy tale motifs in young adult literature. The most serious concern in using fairy tales is the lack of accuracy in the portrayal of trauma and healing. According to Rudolf Schenda, comparisons between fairy tales and the personal experiences of abused children and adolescents can serve to further trap victims within cycles of sexual abuse. Schenda notes:

Fairy tales offer children instead such a thick blanket of long outdated familial, social, and conjugal norms that their divergence from actual patterns of living can lead to powerful disorientation (Telling Tales-Spreading Tales 89).

If abused children and teens look to fairy tales as a way of explaining their abuse, either through bibliotherapy or psychoanalysis, they may find stories that indirectly maintain a hierarchy of parental power and abuse even though the tales end in "happily ever after”.

My research into the world of rape and incest narratives in realistic young adult literature is an attempt to clarify the connections between portrayals of trauma and recovery and the use of fairy tales within these portrayals. It is also an attempt to provide an explanation as to why the literature, in socio-psychological terms, is inaccurate. Without an understanding of why the literature is inauthentic, there can be no understanding of what is needed to change it. Let me be clear: the novels I chose were ones that were readily available at major bookstores. They were also novels that had either received critical acclaim or had been listed as recommended reading for middle and high school students across the country. While I am aware that many authors may not write young adult novels that feature sexually abused teens with bibliotherapy as their main intention, it is feasible that teens, teachers, and award committees read such books with a therapeutic approach in mind. Considering that only 28% of all sexual assaults are ever reported to law enforcement, it is entirely possible that the only source of information and help that young adults receive in dealing with their rape or incest is through reading about other survivors, even fictional ones (RAINN sec. 1).
Because it is impossible to pinpoint which authors intentionally wrote their novels with bibliotherapy in mind, my focus has been to determine how exact the authors are in their depictions of the trauma and healing process. In order to evaluate the young adult novels that deal with rape or incest, I have relied on what psychologist Judith Herman defines as the essential steps in recovery from violence. In her books, *Trauma and Recovery* and *Father-Daughter Incest*, Herman outlines a clear process of trauma and healing based on years of work with rape and incest survivors.

Herman finds that when a child is raped or sexually molested, he or she will experience symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder. In PTSD, a victim’s physical and mental state continues to react to severe trauma, even when the threat of trauma has ceased. PTSD can develop in three ways: hyper arousal, intrusion, and constriction (35). Herman describes the three categories of PTSD: “hyper arousal reflects the persistent expectation of danger; intrusion reflects the indelible imprint of traumatic moment; constriction reflects the numbing response of surrender” (*Trauma* 35). In most young adult realistic novels that explore rape or incest, at least one of the PTSD categories is present in the victim.

Of the PTSD symptoms, hyper arousal is the most commonly portrayed. In Laurie Halse Anderson’s *Speak*, Melinda Sordino, the recent rape victim of a high school football star, is overly sensitive to everything around her. We see hyper arousal most clearly when Melinda helps to dissect a frog in her biology lab. She watches her lab partner position the frog and thinks:

David pins her froggy hands to the dissection tray. He spreads her froggy legs and pins her froggy feet. I have to slice open her belly. She doesn’t say a word. She is already dead. A scream starts in my gut - I can feel the cut, smell the dirt, leaves in my hair (81).

Melinda is so traumatized by the dissection that she faints. In her state of hyper arousal, Melinda sees the connection between her own helplessness in being raped and the frog’s helplessness in being dissected.

While most realistic young adult novels portray accurate accounts of the trauma surrounding sexual abuse, when it comes to the victim’s recovery, the novels do not follow those abused through their healing process as they transform from victims into survivors. In moving from victim to survivor, those who have been assaulted go through three stages in the healing process. According to Herman:

The central task of the first stage is the establishment of safety. The central task of the second stage is remembrance and mourning. The central
task of the third stage is reconnection with ordinary life (Trauma 155).

Though there are elements of healing in all the texts, the healing is usually incomplete and too quick to suggest any lasting alteration in the victim’s status. One primary reason that authors choose to portray trauma over healing is because victims readily enter the first stage of healing after trauma. Having found a safe environment, supportive audience, and threads of self respect, the victim may refrain from further healing, believing herself to be healed already.

In many young adult novels, the first stage of healing is construed as the victim’s complete healing process, entirely bypassing remembrance, mourning, reconnection, and the common setbacks that make healing a cyclical pattern. By ignoring the second and third stages of healing in their texts, authors also ignore the complications that arise from incomplete healing. In Victimized Daughters, Janet Liebman Jacobs finds, “Individuals with histories of sexual abuse were much more likely to experience repeated victimization including rape, attempted rape, unwanted sexual advances, and physical violence in intimate relationships” (101). In Rape: The Misunderstood Crime, Allison and Wrightsman note, “childhood victims may be more likely to experience depression, very low self-esteem, feelings of isolation, interpersonal problems, and substance abuse” (Rape 253). Without proper help, victims may experience sexual, social, and psychological problems throughout their lives.

It is understandable that authors want to be as accurate as possible with their depictions of young adult sexual abuse. Because so many teenagers reach adulthood without revealing their abuse, it would be unreasonable to expect the teenagers in realistic young adult novels such as My Aunt is a Pilot Whale, America, Speak, Weeping Willow, and Lena, to complete the healing process. Still, within the novels there is an inordinate amount of attention paid to sexual trauma rather than sexual healing, so much so that these novels seem to glorify violence and sex at the expense of the victims. While it is likely that the primary reason young adult novels dealing with rape and incest focus on trauma is because the majority of adolescents do not complete the healing process, the numerous references to fairy tales suggest a reliance on fairy tale motifs. This reliance provides a plausible secondary reason as to why young adult authors are inaccurate in their portrayals of teenage sexual abuse. In mimicking fairy tale patterns, whether consciously or not, authors create young adult novels that reinforce gender hierarchies, emphasize violence over healing, and establish convenient happily-ever-after story structures.

Although I am not suggesting that the fairy tales have a direct, and ultimately negative, influence on young adult novels of rape and incest,
what I am suggesting is that there are troublesome comparisons which can be made between certain motifs in fairy tales and young adult literature, especially the use of female silencing to establish male control. By examining the character traits and plots of Little Red Cap and Snow White, by the Brothers Grimm, we can begin to understand how the motifs point to an unrecognized and subtle continuing influence of fairy tales on young adult literature.

The Brothers Grimm, particularly Wilhelm Grimm, created tales that subtly suggested serious underlying family tensions and abuse. In The Rationalization of Abandonment and Abuse in Fairy Tales, Jack Zipes critiques Wilhelm’s writing style:

Wilhelm cultivated a poetic style that produced a comforting tone, awakened a specific desire for maternal connection and home, and created an atmosphere of trust. This tone expresses the ideal of nuclear-familial relations as intimate discourse (speech), and it may act as an expanded organ of the familial in that it temporarily harmonizes or balances the strange and threatening contradictions of social reality through the mythical-magical events and humor of the fairy tale while at the same time imparting proper ways to behave and think. The result is that the imagination of readers undergoes a kind of domestication that does not seem to be harmful, pedagogical, or manipulative because of the coded maternal tone (Happily Ever After 51).

This “comforting tone” is the goal of the tales. In the introduction to their collection, Nursery and Household Tales, the Grimm Brothers elaborate on the binaries inherent in their collection:

These stories are suffused with the same purity that makes children appear so wonderous and blessed to us: they have the same bluish-white, flawless, shining eyes (that small children so love to grab at) which are as big as they will ever get, even as other bodily parts remain delicate, weak, and awkward for use on earth. [...] Evil is neither inconsequential nor something close to home, and not something very bad, to which one could become accustomed, but something terrible, black, and wholly alien that you cannot even approach (qtd. in The Hard Facts of the Grimm’s Fairy Tales 206-207).

In attempting to create “purity” (206), the Brothers relied on images that placed evil outside the family structure by defining it in fantastic and unrealistic terms.

In The Hard Facts of the Grimm’s Fairy Tales, Maria Tatar discovers that the Brothers were highly selective in their choice of what was acceptable material, “When a tale was available in several versions, the Grimms invariably preferred one that camouflaged incestuous desires and Oedipal
entanglements" (9). While there are several possible reasons as to why incest was a subject of such disdain for the Brothers, one thing, according to Maria Warner in *Six Myths of Our Time*, was certain:

On the whole, sex was out and violence was in, and lots of it, especially in the form of gleeful retributive justice. The wicked stepmother in *Snow White* could dance to death in her red-hot shoes, but the Sleeping Beauty — who had borne twins to the prince in earlier versions — could now only be kissed (51).

In submerging incestuous and patriarchal overtones with outlandish violence, the Grimm Brothers endeavoured to create tales suitable for adults and children alike. Though on the surface it appears that they succeeded, Jack Zipes finds that the underlying tensions of the tales still permeate:

It is a soothing, pacifying tale that touches on issues of abuse and abandonment and provides hope that security and happiness can be found after a traumatic episode. [...] But I fear that it is also a tale that reinforces male hegemony and exculpates men from a crime against children, or that rationalizes the manner in which men use the bonds of love to reinforce their control over children (*The Rationalization of Abandonment* 55).

The subtle “male hegemony” (55) that prevails in fairy tale literature, especially that of the Brothers Grimm, can be found in most young adult novels dealing with rape and incest. This “male hegemony” (55) is most readily found in the silencing of female characters.

Scholars have long recognized the silence of women in fairy tale literature. Such silencing not only eliminates narrative viewpoints, but it also easily establishes hierarchies wherein speech is equated with power. According to Ruth B. Bottigheimer, females, especially mother figures, fall into two distinct speech categories in Grimm fairy tales:

At one end of the speech scale are biological mothers - good but dead- and their marriageable daughters. Both are silent ... At the other end of the speech scale appear both evil witches and witchlike figures and authority figures [...] all free to speak (*Silenced Women in the Grimms' Tales* 125).

In examining the fairy tale speech patterns of mothers, daughters, and husband/protectors, a consistent pattern emerges in which “good” females are undermined and silenced while “bad” females and males are given free reign to speak and ultimately control family situations. By looking at the silencing patterns of females in *Little Red Cap* and *Snow White*, various techniques, including death, continued abuse, female power struggles, and ignorance are found to be used in fairy tales and young adult literature of rape and incest.
In *Little Red Cap* by the Grimm Brothers, the two women of the story, the mother and grandmother, have little say. Although we learn that the women love Red Cap, indeed, "If you set eyes on her you could not but love her," the women's voices are drowned by the wolf's and the hunter's (*Classic Fairy Tales* 13). The only speech we hear from Little Red Cap's mother is her warning to the child before she leaves for her grandmother's:

‘Look, Little Red Cap. Here's a piece of cake and a bottle of wine. Take them to your grandmother. She is ill and feels weak, and they will give her strength. You'd better start now before it gets too hot, and when you're out in the woods, walk properly and don't stray from the path. Otherwise you'll fall and break the glass and there'll be nothing for Grandmother. And when you enter her room, don't forget to say good morning, and don't go peeping in all the corners of the room' (*Classic Fairy Tales* 14).

The mother's directives fall on deaf ears. Soon after Little Red Cap meets the wolf, we learn, "She left the path and ran off into the woods looking for flowers" (*Classic Fairy Tales* 14). The mother's warnings are quickly ignored in favour of the wolf's powerful suggestions. Only when Red Cap is eaten by the wolf and saved by the hunter does she remember her mother's words and think, "'Never again will you stray from the path and go into the woods, when your mother has forbidden it' "(*Classic Fairy Tales* 16). Though it appears that Little Red Cap has finally learned her mother's lesson, the fact that she is physically assaulted before remembering it suggests what little power and influence the mother actually holds.

Like Red Cap's mother, Tanja, Tara's mother in *My Aunt is a Pilot Whale*, offers similar veiled warnings. Whereas Red Cap's mother tells Little Red Cap not to stray from her path, an allusion to Red Cap's virginity, Tara's mother speaks of her husband's strange behaviour with his daughter. In a discussion with her sister, Tanja says, "'Anton doesn't pay attention to me anymore. I went to a tanning salon and lost weight, but nothing helps. He acts as if - ' " (35). The suggestion that her husband is displaying inappropriate affection to his daughter is ignored by Tanja's sister. Tanja's suspicions are confirmed when she witnesses her husband molesting her daughter. Once she realizes that her accusations and objections to the molestation produce no change in her husband's actions, Tanja commits suicide, effectively silencing herself completely. As soon as Tanja kills herself, Tara's father is free to continue molesting his daughter. In doing so, he maintains his patriarchal control within the family.

The way women are silenced in fairy tales and young adult literature can vary. While Red Cap's mother is silenced through her daughter's ig-
norance of her, Red Cap’s grandmother is silenced through violence. With the first wolf she meets, the grandmother is quickly eaten and extracted without a word on her part. She is passive and silent, allowing the hunter to save both her and Red Cap. When a different wolf meets Red Cap, the grandmother takes action. After hearing Red Cap’s description of the wolf: “But he had looked at her in such an evil way that ‘If we hadn’t been out in the open, he would have gobbled me right up,’” (Classic Fairy Tales 16) the grandmother devises a plan to drown the wolf. Acting as a fairy godmother, the grandmother eliminates the wolf only after she and Red Cap are first saved by the hunter.

The inability of women to act until a male hero is presented is a recurring theme in fairy tale literature. Red Cap’s grandmother does not act until a suitable male hero, the hunter, acts first. A similar situation occurs in Joyce Carol Thomas’s novel, Marked by Fire. When her daughter is raped, Abyssinia’s mother has little personal recourse. After Brother Jacob turns himself in and is jailed, he tries to return to Abyssinia’s town despite the ignored protests of Abyssinia’s mother. Taking matters into her own hands, Abyssinia’s mother tries a scare tactic to keep her daughter’s rapist away:

Then one day Patience got up off her knees and climbed up in the loft and brought down Strong’s double-barrelled shotgun. She polished its gray metal with a piece of flannel until it gleamed cold silver. She parked the long gun next to her Bible on a table by her front window. She kept the window shining clean and the curtains pulled back so that all her astonished porch-sitting neighbors could see. […] Evidently word reached Brother Jacobs before he could come that way from the penitentiary. The rumor was that he never even stopped in Ponca City but was headed for parts unknown on a Southern Pacific train (92).

The mothers who are not silenced by death or ignorance in fairy tales and young adult literature have few options in protecting their daughters. Though their voices are not heard, they are sometimes able to direct actions, as Red Cap’s grandmother and Abyssinia’s mother do, only after a predominate male or hierarchical system acts first. In the case of Little Red Cap, the hunter is the primary saviour of the story. In Marked by Fire, the penitentiary is the primary punishment for Abyssinia’s rapist. Once the primary sources are used to defend the victim, secondary means of action, rather than speech, are acceptable.

While Little Red Cap depicts virtuous, though silent, mothers, in their 1812 version of Snow White, the Brothers Grimm create a contrast in voice between the good mother and the bad mother. The good female, Snow White’s mother, dies within the first paragraph of the story. Her voice is quickly silenced. All alone, Snow White has no other female to
help her defend against the king's ignorance and her stepmother's hatred.

What Snow White does have is a jealous stepmother whose beliefs are similar to those found in young adult novels of rape and incest. We learn that the stepmother is "proud and arrogant and could not bear being second to anyone in beauty" (Classic Fairy Tales 83). According to Warner, because she is already a second mother and wife, the stepmother holds a fragile status within the family dynamic: "in many fairy tales the tyrants are women and they struggle against their often younger rivals to retain the security that their husbands or their fathers afford them" (From the Beast 217). Snow White threatens to overtake her stepmother in beauty. If she is "the fairest one of all" (Classic Fairy Tales 83), she most certainly vies for her father's love. Whether the love be affectionate or sexual, the stepmother's position in her kingdom is in danger of being replaced by the daughter. The stepmother attempts to kill Snow White in order to maintain her status. In her attempts to kill, the stepmother's voice and actions are heard the loudest.

Contests of beauty are common in fairy tales and young adult literature. In When She Hollers, Tish's beauty is often compared to her mother's. Her abusive stepfather criticizes Tish's claims of incest by referring to Tish's appearance:

"Why should I? I mean, look at yourself — your face is nothing much, and now those pimples and — your figure isn't much, it's nothing compared to your mother's — and your hair, you don't even try — your mother keeps in shape, what would I want — [...] How can you even flatter yourself I'd even notice —'? (9)

Although Tish's stepfather pleads his innocence and preference for his wife, Tish's mother knows otherwise. The narrator tells us:

Because her mother knew. Because the TV was on so her mother couldn't hear, didn't have to hear, not with the TV on, not even when Tish yelled — Because her mother already knew and refused to know (45).

While Snow White's stepmother actively defends her status by attempting to kill Snow White, Tish's mother passively allows the abuse to continue in order to maintain her own favoured position.

Mothers of incest victims often have severe problems accepting their children's claims of sexual molestation because of the strain such acknowledgement creates within the family. In Father-Daughter Incest, Herman writes that:

For the mother, whether or not she suspected the incestuous relationship,
disclosure of the secret is utterly shattering. First of all, she feels betrayed by her husband and daughter. But in addition to her personal feelings of hurt and outrage, she must cope with the knowledge that her marriage and livelihood are in jeopardy. If her daughter’s accusations are true, she faces the prospect of divorce, single parenthood, welfare, social ostracism, and even the possibility of criminal proceedings against her husband (132).

In the face of such imminent threats to the family, mothers frequently refuse to acknowledge the abuse or actively deny it, once again silencing themselves and the victims in favour of maintaining a patriarchal family structure, thus resembling the evil stepmothers in fairy tales.

Not only are mothers silenced in fairy tales, but the young heroines are also silenced, often through violent means. While the silence of the daughters is disturbing, according to Ruth B. Bottingheimer, silence serves dual purposes in the Grimm tales. Bottingheimer finds:

Muteness clearly exists on two levels in Grimm’s Fairy Tales: first, muteness which grows out of the narrative itself, when a character is cursed with or is condemned to silence for a period of time; and second, a silence within the text which results from the author’s or editor’s choice in distributing direct and indirect discourse (Silenced Women 118).

Both types of muteness are found in Little Red Cap and Snow White. The first form of silencing can be found when the females are forcibly silenced through the narrative. When Red Cap is eaten by the wolf and when Snow White is poisoned by her stepmother, the silences that follow allow the hierarchy of male rule to be re-established. While Red Cap is silenced in the belly of the wolf, the hunter acts as her saviour, thus creating a proper male hero. When Snow White is encased in the glass coffin, she reverts to her status as a passive beauty and in doing so, the foundation is laid for her position within a new hierarchy under a suitable husband.

Just as Red Cap and Snow White are silenced when they confront their abusers, so too are the victims in young adult novels. In Speak, Melinda recounts how both the beer she drank and her rapist contributed to her silencing during her rape:

My lips mumble something about leaving, about a friend who needs me, about my parents worrying. I can hear myself — I’m mumbling like a deranged drunk. His lips lock on mine and I can’t say anything. I twist my head away. He is so heavy. There is a boulder on me. I open my mouth to breathe, to scream, and his hand covers it. In my head, my voice is as clear as a bell: ‘NO I DON’T WANT TO!’ But I can’t spit it out (135).

Laurie Halse Anderson’s choice in silencing her character, Melinda, during her rape, is one that lends itself to fairy tale form.
In the second form of silencing that Bottingheimer describes the female characters rarely speak and are often spoken to, again establishing a hierarchical pattern of authority. In "Little Red Cap," the heroine is described through the narrator and other characters. She is "a dear little girl" (*Classic Fairy Tales* 13), beautiful to look at. When she meets the wolf, her thoughts are not revealed, but the narrator explains, "Little Red Cap had no idea what a wicked beast he was and so she wasn't in the least afraid of him" (*Classics Fairy Tales* 14). With so few examples of Red Cap's actual thoughts, the description of her is limited, just as her own speech is limited. It is only after the wolf is killed by the hunter that Red Cap evaluates her experience and thinks, "Never again will you stray from the path and go into the woods, when your mother has forbidden it" (*Classic Fairy Tales* 16).

Like *Little Red Cap*, the narrative of *Snow White* allows little exploration of Snow White's inner thoughts. Only in the encounters with the disguised stepmother do we learn what Snow White thinks — "I can let this good woman in," Snow White thought to herself, and she unbolted the door and bought the pretty lace" (*Classic Fairy Tales* 86). Whereas *Little Red Cap* displays some moral awareness after she is freed by the hunter, Snow White does not display any reflection.

When the female characters do speak, their speech is directly linked to the violence they experience. When Red Cap sees the strange alterations in her grandmother, she offers her infamous series of exclamations: "Oh, Grandmother, what a big, scary mouth you have!" (*Classic Fairy Tales* 15). Once she shares her observations, Red Cap is quickly eaten by the wolf. Her speech and direct observations are linked to her death. Similarly, when Snow White is tempted by her stepmother in the guise of an old peasant, her rejection of the peasant is the most we hear from her. Whereas Red Cap is loud and direct in her observations, Snow White is passive and deferring, telling the peasant that she is not welcome in the house because "The seven dwarfs won't allow it" (*Classic Fairy Tales* 88). After her longest conversation with the stepmother, Snow White is poisoned by the apple. According to Tatar in *Off With Their Heads: Fairy Tales and the Culture of Childhood*, for females to speak in fairy tales is to invite their own demise:

Patterns in the focalizing process admit the reader to the narrator's psychological stance, while speech itself and the manner in which it is introduced form part of the textual "chain of authority" (55).

The "chain of authority" (55) is clear in *Little Red Cap* and *Snow White*. When the female leads speak out against their abusers, they are pun-
ished by silencing, often in the form of continued sexual abuse or death.

Unlike mothers and daughters, males in fairy tales display power through silence, seductive speech, and action to create an overall hierarchy. In *Little Red Cap*, the two males in the text form an interesting contrast. The wolf uses language to seduce and trick. When Red Cap insists upon the path to her grandmother's house, the wolf acts as a nurturing father, saying:

'Little Red Cap, have you seen the beautiful flowers all about? Why don't you look around for a while? I don't think you've even noticed how sweet the birds are singing. You are walking along as if you were on the way to school, and yet it's so heavenly out here in the woods' (*Classic Fairy Tales* 14).

In this scene, the wolf takes the place of the absent father. His polite conversation and supposed concern over Red Cap enable him to reach the grandmother's house where he again uses language to mimic the speech of both Red Cap and the grandmother. By relying on flattery and mimicry, we learn that the wolf "satisfied his desires" (*Classic Fairy Tales* 15).

In the process of child sexual abuse, victims often receive special treats as a compensation for the abuse. In her study of incest, Herman finds:

All of the daughters received favored treatment from their fathers, in the form of gifts, privileges, or exemption from punishments. Many spent long hours in the exclusive company of their fathers, often on adventures which were kept secret from the rest of the family (*Father-Daughter Incest* 82).

In the case of *Little Red Cap*, Red Cap's treat is the affection and fatherly concern that the wolf shows her. Like Red Cap, America, the main character of E.R. Frank's novel, is also given preferential treatment in the form of alcoholic drinks and secret pornography by his abuser, Browning. As long as he remains quiet about his molestation, America is also privy to Browning's fatherly affection:

We don't read stories too much anymore. Sometimes it starts out like that, but mostly Browning just begins by touching. At first, I believe him that it's cool, because it feels real nice. He talks to me soft, and his voice gets low, and he pats me all light, the way a father would take care of his baby, and it feels good. He tells me how what we're doing is a special secret, and how he wouldn't get with just anybody this way, and how he's helping me learn how to be a man, and how I'm such a good learner (*America* 98).

Abusers use gifts such as flattery, concern, and conversation to win the continued silence of their victims. Just as Browning uses objects, touch,
and gifts to keep America quiet, so too does the wolf use fatherly concern to suggest that Red Cap stray from the path.

In contrast to the wolf, the hunter is the silent father figure in *Little Red Cap*. He is the one who suspects a problem at grandmother's house and upon entering, indicates he has been chasing the wolf for some time, "I've found you at last, you old sinner" (*Classic Fairy Tales* 15). That the hunter's first thought upon seeing the wolf is to settle a score with his old enemy demonstrates that the tale is not about the survival of the women, but the restoration of male hierarchy. The hunter kills the seducing wolf and thus repairs the entrenched hierarchy of the tale. Like the hunter, the silent and unseen father of the story remains head of the family rather than the wolf. Just as E. R. Frank's *America* ends with America in the hands of a responsible male caretaker and psychiatrist, so too does *Little Red Cap* end with the restoration of a proper father figure.

Male speech patterns that act as symbols of authority are also prevalent in *Snow White*. Within the tale, the four types of men, the father, the hunter, the dwarves, and the prince, all work to transform Snow White from abused daughter to domestic wife. As Snow White moves from one male to another, she becomes entangled in strict and overlapping definitions of femininity.

In the introductory lines of *Snow White*, we read that after the first queen dies in childbirth, "A year later the king married another woman" (*Classic Fairy Tales* 83). Though the king is absent from the rest of the text, according to Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, his presence is keenly felt:

...there is clearly at least one way in which the King is present. His, surely, is the voice of the looking glass, the patriarchal voice of judgment that rules the Queen's - and every woman's - self evaluation. (*Snow White and Her Wicked Stepmother* 292-293)

In choosing the stepmother he does, the king indirectly allows the contest of beauty and subsequent attempted murders of Snow White to take place. Because the women are dependent on his wealth to ensure their livelihood, their competition is necessary and required as there can be only one Queen. While the King does not physically or sexually abuse Snow White himself, the hierarchy of his kingdom, and his own silence, lead to the abandonment and abuse the stepmother inflicts upon Snow White.

Being abandoned by a real father is common in young adult novels dealing with rape and incest. When Tiny Lambert is raped by her stepfather in Ruth White's *Weeping Willow*, Tiny has a dream in which she con-
fronts her real father. She yells at him, " 'You should have been there to look after me!' " (119). Although her real father disappeared before she was born, his authority is still felt within the household. According to Roberta Seelinger Trites, an absent parent in literature is often problematic for young adult characters:

Even if parent figures are absent from an adolescent novel, their physical absence often creates a psychological presence that is remarked upon as a sort of repression felt strongly by the adolescent character (Disturbing the Universe 56).

Because he is not there to protect her, Tiny is convinced that her father's absence caused her rape.

Abandoned by her absent father, Snow White is also abandoned by the hunter. When she begs the hunter for her life, we learn, "Snow White was so beautiful that the huntsman took pity on her and said: 'Just run away, you poor child' " (Classic Fairy Tales 84). Here again, Snow White's beauty proves to be a hindrance. In meeting with the hunter, her beauty works to save her life at the expense of being left in the woods where "wild beasts darted near her at times" (Classic Fairy Tales 84). The hunter grants Snow White her freedom, but at a terrible price. Gubar and Gilbert assert that the hunter's abandonment of Snow White leads to further problems, "Certainly when the kindly huntsman-father saved her life by abandoning her in the forest at the edge of his kingdom, Snow White discovered her own powerlessness" (Snow White 295). Away from home and lost in the woods, Snow White is completely erased and silenced from the world she knows.

Powerless, Snow White seeks a way to reclaim her identity. As luck would have it, she stumbles into a strange house:

Everything in the house was tiny, and indescribably dainty and spotless. There was a little table, with seven little plates on a white cloth. Each little plate had a little spoon, seven little knives and forks, and seven little cups. Against the wall were seven little beds in a row, each made up with sheets as white as snow (Classic Fairy Tales 84).

The emphasis on repetition and cleanliness in the description of what Snow White finds in the house of the seven dwarves alludes to the domestic role she is about to accept. Though the dwarves' first reaction to Snow White is to admit, " 'What a beautiful child!' " (Classic Fairy Tales 85), they quickly alter their perception of her from a beauty to a domestic. The dwarves use their powers of language to limit Snow White's behaviour. The dwarves derive an agreement with Snow White, " 'If you will keep house for us, cook, make the beds, wash, sew, knit, and keep eve-
rything neat and tidy, then you can stay with us, and we'll give you everything you need' " (Classic Fairy Tales 85). In order to regain a sense of power and security, Snow White accepts a less threatening, yet equally submissive, domestic female role.

Limiting the behaviour of sexual abuse victims is a common practice of molesters. Only by controlling actions and speech through fear and threats are molesters able to continue abusing. In Maya Angelou's I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings, Marguerite is threatened with violence if she breaks the rules and tells of her rape:

He released me enough to snatch down my bloomers, and then he dragged me closer to him. Turning the radio up loud, too loud, he said, 'If you scream, I'm gonna kill you. And if you tell, I'm gonna kill Bailey.' I could tell he meant what he said (78).

According to Herman, creating a set of rules in a sexually abusive situation creates a double bind for the abused:

The arbitrary enforcement of rules, combined with the constant fear of death or serious harm, produced a paradoxical result. On the one hand, it convinces children of their utter helplessness and the futility of resistance. Many develop the belief that their abusers have absolute or even supernatural powers, can read their thoughts, and can control their lives entirely. On the other hand, it motivates children to prove their loyalty and compliance. These children double and redouble their efforts to gain control of the situation in the only way that seems possible, by 'trying to be good' (Trauma 100).

Although the dwarves in Snow White are clearly not sexual abusers, their reliance on rules to isolate and protect Snow White produces an altered and silenced heroine very similar to the abused daughters found in young adult novels of rape and incest.

Once Snow White moves from beauty to domestic, she is introduced to a role that encompasses both positions. Poisoned by her stepmother, Snow White remains frozen in a glass coffin guarded by the dwarves. Her beauty, passivity, and silence, rather than her domestic skills, are on display for the prince. This time, her beauty serves to redefine her as a wife and mother. When Snow White is freed from the poisonous apple piece, the prince tells her, "I love you more than anything else on earth. Come with me to my father's castle. You shall be my bride" (Classic Fairy Tales 89). Just as the dwarves direct Snow White's behaviours, so too does the prince direct her future choice, thus limiting her own speech.

As the prince's bride, Snow White claims the role she could not have with her father — that of wife. She finds her correct role, as both beauty
and domestic, under another male hierarchy. At the end of the tale, according to Gubar and Gilbert, Snow White finds her place:

An 'it,' a possession, Snow White has become an idealized image of herself, and as such she has definitively proven herself to be patriarchy's ideal woman, the perfect candidate for Queen (Snow White 296).

Because there are no other choices available to her, Snow White is condemned to live under patriarchal rule. As readers, we are not troubled by the lack of choice available to Snow White because a positive ending has been easily and magically provided.

Although both tales are troubling in their depictions of women and violence, they end with a "happily ever after" story framework. A secure and happy ending in fairy tales comes at a high price. According to Jack Zipes, the price paid establishes a firm male hierarchy:

Politically, states and families in Western societies have been based on male hierarchical rule, and fairy tales, which have played such an important part in the socialization of children, contain arrangements that legitimate the power of adults. Therefore, to be truly accepted as a classical fairy tale and presumed "good" for the well-being of children, a narrative must be eminently rational and subscribe to notions of the acceptable treatment of children and male hegemony, even if the structure of the tale conceals and perhaps perpetuates abuse of children (The Rationalization of Abandonment 60).

Although Red Cap and Snow White are abused and silenced throughout the text, the resulting return to male rule through the hunter in Little Red Cap and the prince in Snow White creates a sense of security that undermines the violence and latent sexuality that came before.

The same "happily ever after" story structure can be found in young adult texts. In Lena, the sequel to Jacqueline Woodson's novel of incest, I Hadn't Meant to Tell You This, Lena and Dion are rescued from their life as runaways by a friend's father that agrees to adopt them. Although references to their sexual abuse are prevalent throughout, once they learn that they will have a home and family again, they promptly forget their father's abuse. Their new father figure and the hierarchy created by his position within the community provide a security that ignores the girls' violent past.

Whether young adult authors are conscious of it or not, the speedy recovery of rape and incest victims mirrors the recovery of fairy tale heroines from dangerous situations. To Warner, this recovery is troublesome:

The silence of the heroine presents as heroic a common, defeatist re-
response which the audience listening to such a tale would perhaps recognize as one of the few paths open to them. With the essential heroic optimism of the fairy tale as a genre, the story snatches victory from the jaws of defeat, eloquent vindication from the sentence of silence, triumph from the degradation of voicelessness (From the Beast 395).

If readers look to the silence and eventual rescue of fairy tale heroines as an acceptable and believable pattern, easily applied in cases of rape and incest, they are vulnerable to continued abuse and silence. The return to an established hierarchy encourages a continued silence on the part of the victim and an ignorance of the violence itself. Even though the wolf and stepmother are punished, the females do not show any feelings connected to the violence they experienced. Indeed, they say nothing at all. The "happily-ever-after structure," which punishes the wicked wolf and stepmother while affirming a male hierarchy, leaves no room for speech concerning violence or recovery from violence.

It is vitally important that fairy tales be reconsidered in terms of their influence on young adult novel structures. Because young adult texts of rape and incest have been generally accepted without comment or analysis, little connection has been made to the fairy tale roots from which they may derive. This is unfortunate, especially when considering the argument of Rudolf Schenda, who writes:

It is useful to remove the fairy tale from its pedestal, to set it on the floor, not so that one can look at it from top to bottom, but so that one can look it directly in the face. The effect is twofold: the countenance of fairy tale reveals many flaws and the other movements of folk poesie seem of greater stature (Telling Tales 89).

In being given so much latitude by readers and publishers, fairy tales have managed to escape serious mainstream criticism in terms of their influence on realistic young adult literature. In highlighting mainstream fairy tale characters and plots, such as those found in Little Red Cap and Snow White, other stories and motifs, perhaps even ones which focus on recovery rather than trauma, have been forgotten.

WORKS CITED


