

Retelling Cinderella

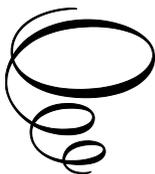
Retelling Cinderella:

Cultural and Creative Transformations

Edited by

Nicola Darwood and Alexis Weedon

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This book is dedicated to our friend and colleague Giannandrea Poesio whose grand battement jeté led us to this grand allegro, but who did not see our opening night.

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INTRODUCTION

NICOLA DARWOOD AND ALEXIS WEEDON

In both *Harper's Bazaar* and *Maclean's Magazine* in March 1932 there is a full-page advert for a 'Coach for Cinderella'. The body styling, uses of colour, attention to upholstery, interior trim, fittings and equipment conveniences of this gorgeous concoction, we are told, have 'had the demands of feminine censorship as their standard'. The Coach is in fact a luxury car and the company, Fisher Bodies, is targeting the feminine tastes of the emancipated woman: 'Freed after untold centuries from the narrow restrictions of a purely domestic life, she has emerged, like a radiant Cinderella, into a broader, finer, more beautifying existence'. In this one advert we can see the confluence of themes which surround the Cinderella story: escape from drudgery, wish to travel, the transformation of mundane objects into desirable ones, and joyful pleasure of finery ('A Coach for Cinderella', 51).

The story is so well known that it has become a shorthand for the unexpected success of the disregarded: men as well as women, companies as well as people. Amusingly in the same year as the *Harper's Bazaar* and *Maclean's Magazine* advert, *The Exeter and Plymouth Gazette* reported on the resurgence of fish and chips which was becoming 'a most respectable as well as profitable business', 'ceasing to be Cinderella'. The contrast between American and British cultures in the two publications is diverting, but the meaning of the reference transcends both. Today Cinderella's eclecticism is apparent on social media which provides many examples of cross-cultural use: Instagram's hashtag #reallifecinderella features everything from personal stories to shoe art and the framed motivational quote to 'set my goals and achieve them all'. A similar search on Twitter loads references to dating, weddings, make-overs, party dresses, shoes (lost and found), moments of change in life, and overcoming the odds. Disney .gifs have become digital motifs to communicate feelings of drudgery (cleaning), the pleasure of giving (mice helpers), the doom of deadlines (midnight clock), greed (Lucifer's gambling), and the moment the shoe fits as something comes right. Overall, social media use shows how the term is still being morphed and made relevant in the modern-day.

The essays in this volume reflect on the material and cultural legacy of the tale and how it remains active and relevant in many different societies where social and family relationships are adapting to modern culture. It opens aptly with a wander through one person's collection of Cinderella books, *objet* and ephemera from across the world which has been donated to the University of Bedfordshire. The Collection holds materials ranging from opera and ballet programmes, books and theatre models, to collectable figurines, toys and merchandise which convey the wide variety of adaptations and performances that the story has inspired. These were not simply bought, they were the product of a singular interest in the tale over many years and demonstrate how her passion caused the collector to go to The Royal Ballet and attend a pantomime on the same theme, save the plastic key ring of a crystal shoe and treasure a china figurine. It gathers together contemporary kitsch and original editions of the earliest retellings.

So we took the lead from the collection and structured the book so that the reader moves from contemporary forms of Cinderella back in time. We start with Cinderella as a parodic meme. The frames from the Disney animation have become the creative substrate for mobile memes circulated from phone to phone in Colombia. For comic effect these memes reversed the mild-mannered Cinderella of the children's story, creating a foul-mouthed sassy character. This cultural transduction and appropriation is investigated by Enrique Uribe-Jongbloed and César Mora-Moreo whose research into this phenomena shows how it was localised to specific bus routes and idiomatic dialect. *Cenicienta costeña* parodies the subservience of the traditional character, but also the Disneyfication of the tale. The passivity of Cinderella has been problematised within a more feminist culture. Next in the collection is Marta Cola and Elena Caoduro's inquiry into contemporary online dating through the Tinder app and their discussion of the way the feminine derivative term Tindarella has become meme for women's proactive dating. They lay out for us the array of spin-offs such as advice blogs, multiple newspaper columns, and personal narratives in book form written by women of their experiences of finding a partner online. Such an active role for women can be interpreted differently in different cultures. It is a theme which Nicky Didicher explores in chapter 3 as she takes us into the young adult science fiction world of Marissa Meyer's *Cinder* (2012). The novel challenges both our gender expectations and our moral expectations, enlarging the young readers' spectrum of possibilities. Cinder is a mechanic and a cyborg, more comfortable in coveralls than dresses, and she is incapable of producing tears. The ideology of *The Lunar Chronicles* series promotes

diversity and complicates the morality of the traditional Cinderella characters which then have to be assessed afresh by the young reader. Nevertheless, it also employs common romance-novel tropes to re-assert the value of heteronormativity allowing for a conventional happy ending.

Moving from the paratextual use of Cinderella to the transformational narrative itself, Eleanor Andrews investigates differences between the notions of change and transformation across versions of Cinderella and Pygmalion from Ovid's poem to a selection of film representations including *My Fair Lady* (Cukor, 1964), *Educating Rita* (Gilbert, 1983), *Pretty Woman* (Marshall, 1990) and *Nikita* (Besson, 1990). The transformation of Pygmalion objectifies her, creating an object for the male gaze, while *My Fair Lady* and *Educating Rita* dramatise the transformative power of education and its ability to overcome the disadvantages of poverty and class. Filmic and theatrical versions often emphasise Cinderella's transformation through dress and, in the next chapter, Sally King delves into the early English and German translations of *Cendrillon* and *Aschenputtel*, mining these texts for their references to changes in fashion, and ideas of beauty and appearance. She highlights the differences arising from a small variation in word choice, and she reflects on the intertwining of ideology and sartorial detail while considering interlingual and intercultural exchanges which have a significant effect on the way that women are represented in these different editions.

The theatre motif however is never far away and Nicola Darwood's discussion of Nancy Spain's *Cinderella goes to the Morgue: An Entertainment* (1950) draws on a history of pantomime and detective fiction. She considers Spain's appropriation of the Cinderella tale in the post-World War II era, as her characters are embroiled in murder and mayhem in a witty satire on the world of pantomime with all the stock characters a reader could possibly hope to encounter. Moving back into the late nineteenth and early twentieth century Rebecca Morris turns the attention of this collection to the use of the Cinderella motif in the fiction of Anne Thackeray Ritchie and Frances Hodgson Burnett, authors who chose to critique the Victorian ideal of a submissive Cinderella figure and who used their fiction as a vehicle to comment on contemporary attitudes towards gender, particularly in the light of suffrage campaigns in the second half of the nineteenth century.

Underlining the undeniable fact that there is not just one version of the story of Cinderella, Maia Lamarque's essay continues the exploration of the Cinderella tale in a European context as she provides a detailed history of the story within the history of twentieth and twenty-first century Spain. Tracing the history of the Cinderella story in Spain back to the medieval

variant, “Estrellita de oro”, and then drawing on a considerable body of knowledge of the political history of Spain, she considers how the representation of the Cinderella figure changed in response to societal and political changes over the centuries, from a conservative representation in the 1950s to one of political resistance in the twenty-first century. Donna Gilligan focuses on Irish retellings which draw on a rich tradition of Irish storytelling in both the written and the oral form. Highlighting differences between Perrault and the Grimm Brothers’ versions of the tale, she demonstrates how the Irish variants blend Irish mythology and folklore, providing a valuable insight into the native traditions and the contemporary society which enjoyed these tales.

We end with two creative pieces: ‘Domestic narratives in Cinderella’s cultural translation’, which opens with the creative reflections of Vanessa Marr as she considers the tale of Cinderella as ‘the ultimate domestic narrative’. Discussing her creative practice of embroidering of yellow dusters, she challenges a dominant motif of the Cinderella tale—that domesticity is the route to marital happiness—and evokes a catalyst for change, not just for Cinderella, but for all women. Her essay embroiders together practice and theory as she explores her own relationship with both the material and the cultural environment needed to effect change. Finally, Lesley McKenna’s short story updates the Cinderella tale, setting it within the emotional high-stakes of a high school Prom. Her reflection on the themes of the fairy tale illustrates how the material has limitless flexibility for the creative writer. It is an apt ending to this collection of storytelling transformations of Cinderella.

Modern retellings of the story abound: Kenneth Branagh’s live action *Cinderella* (2015) was set the Disney fantasy world of movie stars in ball gowns and crystal shoes, with a little pantomime humour from the transformed animals and the pumpkin coach, but Michael Bourne’s ballet touring in 2017–2018 set the story in 1940s wartime Britain, opening with the cry ‘do not look at the sky’ during air raids: the traditional tale of maidenly coming-out at a ball becomes a wartime affair broken off by a bomb shell falling on Cinderella and her airman-prince who end up hospitalised. Its radical message of broken families and disrupted relationships is emphasised by Cinderella’s disabled father, a veteran from the previous war. Nevertheless, the *deus ex machina*, an angel, ensures a fairy tale ending, complete with ball gown and fireworks. These recent versions illustrate the continuing duality of the story. The uplifting message of Cinderella still sells an increasingly problematic conformity to traditional womanhood by persuading you to buy comfort, aspire to be a domestic goddess or reaffirm the myth of a ‘happy ever after’. But it’s also

evident that she can also be the symbol for suffrage, for equality and empowerment. We believe that her story will continue to be reused, reappropriated, and refashioned in a way that continues to highlight changing societal mores and ideologies: always fascinating, for ever changing.

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CHAPTER ONE

THE MATERIAL CULTURE OF CINDERELLA: INTRODUCING THE CINDERELLA COLLECTION

ALEXIS WEEDON

In August 2012 the University of Bedfordshire was given a collection of items all about Cinderella. It was one person's collection, gathered over a number of years in the 1990s and is an example of a fascination with the fairy tale and its retellings in our culture. It is housed at our library in Bedford and shares its archival lodging with the much larger Hockliffe collection of rare primers, readers and children's books that was donated by a specialist bookseller from the town. On the open shelves in this cool room are the books and alongside are the archive boxes with the *objet* and *ephemera*. There are cuttings, tins, jigsaws, souvenir programmes, figurines, and porcelain collectables. Each are not necessarily unique in themselves, but as a collection it is intriguing. It offers unusual insights into the range of discourses and disciplines that claim the tale of Cinderella.

What was the reason for the acquisition of this material and how can we learn from it? Deposited with the collection is a series of annotated file cards and clearly some of the items were aids to a talk; the laminated copies of illustrations from the famous Opie collection of children's literature for example and the portfolio of front covers of novel adaptations of the Cinderella story for the young adult market. There are numerous clippings from newspapers, sadly for us undated, but the notes say they were the result of 'a year in which she looked for every reference to Cinderella in the news'. Regardless of antiquity or significance, originality or value, the eclectic collection focuses solely on references to Cinderella. Its broad church approach encompasses rare editions and kitsch, collector's items and magazine pages.

Looking through the material some themes emerge. Firstly, there is an interest in education. The owner's decision to donate to the library at Bedford, where the University's history can be traced back to one of the earliest teacher training colleges in Britain, supports this, and it came with

a request that the collection was ‘put to use’ by students. Secondly, it is not a bibliophile’s collection and although there are first editions most of the books are not rare or expensive. The material is mostly from the nineteenth and twentieth century, the last acquisition is 2008. Thirdly the collection includes the merchandise that has grown up around the Cinderella characters from key-ring souvenirs to porcelain figurines. And finally there are theatre programmes to professional pantomime, opera, ballet as well as amateur and school performances.

The Collection gives a particular lens through which to view the Cinderella tale. It is not representative, or even a reliable subset, it is necessarily selective and possibly serendipitous, as some items appear to have been gifts to the collector. However it is interesting because of the range of material that has been kept and because it was actively added to in the 1990s, a period of significant change in the media and publishing industries. It therefore provides a glimpse into the history of the tale in children’s education and play, specifically in the revisionary retellings following the women’s movement in the 1970s and 1980s and the effect of globalisation in the media industries on the representation of the Cinderella character and her alignment with the ‘princesses’ party dresses and toys marketed to young girls in the 1990s.

Trends and market sectors

To give us some context of the use of the story from the 1800s—the earliest item in the collection is George Cruikshank’s chapbook of Cinderella printed in 1814—we can look at the occurrence of Cinderella in Google’s text corpus (fig. 1-1). This also provides a clue to the popular use in different linguistic cultures.¹ The analysis of the Google corpus provides, as big data does, alternative ways into a problem. It gives us a glimpse of the use of the Cinderella motif *inside* texts that may not be ostensibly about the fairy tale as we shall see later. The ngrams chart shows a growth trend in its usage in English from the 1790s to the 1920s and after a period of decline, another upward trend from the 1960s to the millennium. In Spanish there is a different pattern, a slow growth from 1890s to 1990s and a third pattern in German and Italian where its use is not significant until after the second world war. There is a suggestion in the chart that the impetus for the retelling of fairy tale and the use of

¹ We must treat Google ngrams with caution as it is a limited and unrepresentative corpus and does not have the scholarship of existent bibliographies or bibliographical histories of Cinderella.

Cinderella motif was until the mid-twentieth century dependant on the way the tale was collected by folklorists and retold for the children's market and that translations emphasised the linguistic or national origin. In the second half of the twentieth century, the forces of globalisation came into effect, first through film adaptations and later through 'Disneyfication', franchising of characters and branding.

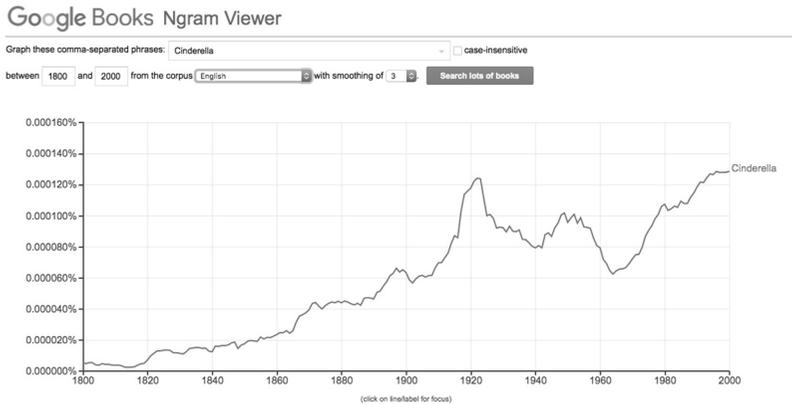


Fig. 1-1. Google ngrams chart of the occurrence of Cinderella in English text corpus. Source: <http://books.google.com/ngrams>

In the Cinderella collection at the University of Bedfordshire there are a number of books from the 1970s and 1980s about the study of folklore published in Britain and America. It is indicative of a wider resurgence in Anglophone folklore studies; from two women authors in the field there is Katherine M. Briggs, former president of the British Folklore Society's work, *British Folk Tales and Legends: a Sampler*, and the amusingly titled *Field Guide to the Little People* by Nancy Arrowsmith that categorises 79 different types of supernatural creatures, details of which were compiled on her travels through USA, Europe and India. Other trade titles show the appeal of folklore theories to hobbyists such as the controversial proponent of Atlantis, Lewis Spence's work, *British Fairy Origins* and the readable retellings of Cinderella-type stories from across the world gathered by Neil Philip. Alongside these are two University Press titles: Alan Dundas', *Cinderella, a Casebook* and John Martin Ellis', *One Fairy Story Too Many: The Brothers Grimm and Their Tales*. Nevertheless the folk festival revivals and folk studies publications of the 1970s and 1980s are a separate cultural movement.

Reflecting the trends identified in the ngrams, the Cinderella collection has a number of editions in different languages. These date from the 1990s and are indicative of the changes occurring in publishing at that time. The square mini hardbacks of Stephanie Laslett's *Cinderella* [*Assepoester*] in Dutch and English illustrated by Carole Sharpe (Laslett and Sharpe *Assepoester*; *Cinderella*; Laslett and Sharpe *Cinderella*) show how transnational the children's sector had become. Audio technology was important in this market as we see with Eva Wenzel-Bürger's picture book *Aschenputtel: ein Märchen der Gebrüder Grimm* [*Cinderella: a fairy tale by the Brothers Grimm*] that comes with a cassette. For the non-readers Ingrid Buthod-Girard's pop-up panorama book illustrated by Carlos Busquets and published by Hemma foregrounds the continuing and singular importance of the illustrator in children's book market. Busquets's work became global: he is known for his own characters El Conejo Sócrates and Le Petit Lapin Bleu and began his career with the Spanish publisher Editorial Roma. Later he placed his colourful, rich and detailed illustration with Susaeta Publishing, and with Hemma who published children's books in French and Dutch based on the characters from television, film and toys with franchises such as Disney, Barbie, Charlotte aux Fraises, Littlest Petshop and Dora. Hemma are part of Grupo Planeta who have a large stake in the Spanish and Latin American market and are the second largest publishing group in France. Their operation is indicative of the forces of globalisation, the move by many publishers to cheaper printing in Italy, and the reach of character brands.

The Collection also brings up the other uses of the motif: in psychology the Cinderella complex was used to refer to women's fear of independence and wish to be taken care of by men. Colette Dowling described it analytically in her book in the collection. Another application, the Cinderella syndrome, ranges across psychology to self-help books. The Christian author Lee Ezell sees the problem as one of what to do when your dreams don't come true. In psychology it is the name given to dysfunctional relationships between stepmothers and stepchildren: 'A child is one hundred times more likely to be abused or killed by a stepparent than by a genetic parent' warns Martin Daly and Margo Wilson on the cover of *Truth about Cinderella: a Darwinian View of Parental Love* and they examine the destructive power of false accusations made by children of a stepmother or a stepmother over-compensating to gain acceptance by her new family.

Nowadays, the self-help sector has one of largest market shares in Britain and America. The tale of Cinderella deals with family relationships and women's empowerment and offers a short-hand for authors offering

help to customers seeking guidance. The titles on Amazon.com show how the story character is read today both as a vindication of womanhood and as an out-dated feminine model: *Simply be Cinderella—the guide to building self esteem, confidence & happiness* reflects positively on the character while *Put the pumpkin down and take yourself to the ball, a fresh fun guide to taking control of your life* implies Cinderella has no agency. Similarly some authors ask: *Would you really want the shoe to fit? Subtle ways women are seduced and socialized into servitude and stereotypes*, while others take issue with the idealised romance: *The real reason you can't find (or keep) a prince*.

In the Collection we see that Cinderella is powerful metonymic in book titles not only in the expected categories of folklore, fiction, children's and education, self-help and psychology, but which also extends into other popular publishing categories in the 1980s and 1990s such as military, sociology, cookery, design history and fashion (Brown; Mazza; Tillet).

Performance and play

Many of the titles in the Collection are from children's fiction and retell the fairy tale for a young audience. There is a strong performance theme in toy books or games, pantomime, plays and songs. These books are aimed at parents and teachers as much as the children themselves. Nineteenth century publishers included it in their series such as Warne's National Nursery Library, Macmillan's The Golden Treasury, Halle's Jack and Jill series, and publishers of children's books kept it on their list: there are examples of T. Nelson & Sons, Blackie & Sons and T. C. & E. C. Jack in the collection. For the slimmer pocket Aldine's penny pamphlets of Tales for Little People catered for the domestic reader. Asking a well-known author to refresh the story is an old publishing tactic: the Victorian writer and poet Dinah Maria Craik known for her novel *John Halifax Gentleman* 'rendered anew' the best popular fairy stories for Macmillan in The Golden Treasury series (*Fairy Book: The Best Popular Fairy Stories Selected and Rendered Anew*). It had a steady stream of repeat print orders for her simple retelling. The language is unimaginative but her name and the pictures sold the book. It was still in print before the First World War when Warwick Goble was the gift book illustrator for Macmillan and produced an edition with thirty-two illustrations.

If Craik's retelling is for reading at the fireside or in a child's bedroom, the later Victorian Florence Bell's is aimed at schools. Although a liberal, her's was no rags to riches story: she was the daughter of the Lord Mayor

of London and she married into the steel, colliery and railway industry, but she was a social investigator and educationalist. The Hugh Bell schools in Middlesbrough were named after her husband and the two were involved in the schools' annual activities. *Fairy Tale Plays and How to Act Them* issued by the educational publisher Longman is prefaced by a didactic introduction to rehearsing junior school children, putting together a simple stage, making props and illustrated steps for the different dances that the children perform. Music and songs are included within the play dialogue. Bell dedicated her book to 'Anne Thackeray Ritchie in affection, admiration and gratitude', an author whose own adaption of the Cinderella story is examined in chapter eight of this volume. Bell was not a teacher herself, nor an actor, but she wrote plays and children's books, and staged a costly historical pageant of over 500 people for which she sold her editions of Dickens to fund. Her concern for the community was deep and with stepdaughter Gertrude Bell she researched working class living and reading habits in Middlesbrough published in her book *At The Works*.

Bell's is not the only play in the collection, Eleanor Farjeon's *The Glass Slipper* was originally a collaboration with her brother Herbert in 1944.² It was later novelised and this edition is in the collection illustrated by Ernest H. Shepard, especially known for his drawings of Winnie-the-Pooh. Farjeon's love of poetry and lightness of touch captures some of the on-stage moments. Described as 'not a pantomime' the idea was to 'tell the fairy tale for its own sake' and the production was well received by the public (Anon 'Pantomimes'). It was produced by English Academy Award winning theatre and film actor Richard Donat (remembered now for his role in Hitchcock's *The 39 Steps*) and had harlequinade characters, a speaking grandfather clock and music by Clifton Parker. The Ballet Rambert did the dances. In her day, Farjeon won the Carnegie (1955), the Hans Christian Andersen (1956) and the Regina (1959) medals for children's literature and gave her own name to a prize still awarded by publishers. She is recognised now for her poetry and her short story collection *The Little Bookroom* (1955).

The twenty-first century notion that children come to a text after having met the story already through film or television has historical antecedents, as has the engagement of children through participation in the storytelling. Bell's and Farjeon's books show us that many children saw it in a theatrical version, perhaps as a pantomime or a stage play or even an opera before the television era. For example the Collection has Alan Blyth

² Although MGM had bought the rights to the play, the story differs in the musical film adaption (Walters 1955).

and Emanuele Luzzati's illustrated *La Cenerentola: the Story of Rossini's Opera* for young theatre-goers and theatre programmes from performances as varied as celebrity panto, Royal Ballet, even Cinderella on ice, as well as hand-crafted programmes from school productions. Janet and Alan Ahlberg's amusing *Cinderella Show* derives its humour from such an imagined school production related through graphics and speech bubbles.



Fig. 1-2. Inside front cover and book opening showing *Cinderella Panorama Book: Six Magnificent Scenes*, Collins c.1950, author's own photographs.

What the children saw on stage could be re-enacted at home and publishers and printers have always been ingenious in how they have used the codex structure and the technology of paper in various forms. Collins's patented panorama book retold Cinderella in 'six magnificent scenes' (c.1950) (fig. 1-2). Instructions on the inside cover showed the children how to use the cut-out characters to dramatise the story. Its board 'pages' are joined and die-cut to fold out as proscenium arches with printed

scenes. It was published around the same year as Walt Disney's magic wand book that includes several 3-dimensional plates and glasses to view them with (*Cinderella Magic Wand Book*). Amazingly both have survived childhood and 80 years. More recent interactive publications in the collection include pop-up books, and a crime story version in which Rumpelstiltskin is the detective employed by Cinderella's father-in-law-to-be to seek out the truth about her before her marriage, the documentary evidence being hidden in envelopes that the older child can open (Anon *Cinderella: A Mini Pop-up Storybook*; Durant and Collins; Perrault and Mateu). A magic 3-dimensional fairy-tale world by Ronne Randall illustrated by Frances Thatcher also has Richard Jewitt's creative contribution in paper engineering acknowledged. So the collection is about the material culture of Cinderella and as the last accession was made in 2008 and it is exclusively analogue.

Two centuries of lessons from Cinderella

Children's books have always been for education as well as entertainment and Cinderella's story lends itself to a variety of lessons relevant to the period in which they were published. The oldest, George Cruickshank's chapbook, is an early form of what he later issued in his fairy tale library. Cruickshank was a campaigner against the evils of drink due to the fact that his father died early of alcohol poisoning. So at the end of *Cinderella and the Glass Slipper* when the King plans to 'celebrate the marriage of Cinderella and the Prince with "fountains of wine"', the Fairy Godmother objects. The King orders all the "wine, beer, and spirits" in the land to be burned in a giant bonfire on the night of the wedding—a teetotal happy ever after (Scott).

Later in the century the socialist journalist C. Allan Clarke chose the tale for his own retelling. He worked in the cotton mills and then as a teacher, submitting his work to local and national newspapers. His unionism and book *The Effects of the Factory System* brought him into politics, although the reception of his own newspapers convinced him readers wanted entertainment, and he created the comic character Bill Spriggs whose dialogues in Lancashire dialect made his popularity. Clarke lived by his pen and his *Old Tales for Young Folks* issued by the Manchester publisher John Heywood was one of his many publications. The *Old Tales* are 'Jack the Giant Killer', Cinderella and 'Hassan the Rope maker', all stories of the poor bettering themselves through luck, wit and industry; for example in the lesser known tale Hassan loses his gold and yet makes his fortune selling a lump of lead-weight to a fisherman

who pays him with a fish containing a diamond. Clarke shares his humour with his young readers calling Cinderella's stepmother 'Raspberry' and stepsisters 'Tart' and 'Spice', while Cinderella's father is 'careless, fond of rich living always in debt'—and is called Bottle. The reference to alcoholism would not be lost the grown-up reader. The wedding draws on the traditional music of northern England when they have fireworks, cannon and a brass band.

Localisation of the tale increases the sense of ownership and identification, as in another regional retelling by folklorist Padraic Colum. *The Girl who sat by the Ashes* was first published in 1919 three years after the Easter Rising armed insurrection against British rule and draws on national Irish myths of enchanted woods, crows and magic cloaks and chatting geese and giants. Colum's Cinderella, called Maid-alone, has her own adventures, but remains steadfast in character and true to her cause. The book was reissued in 1968 with illustrations by Imero Gobbato which is the edition in the Collection. The selection of Cinderella for inclusion is indicative of a broader appeal of the tale to those on the political left: a social revolutionary message can be found in the transformation from rags to riches and the discovery of goodness and beauty among the disregarded and impoverished.

In the 1980s Walt Disney's *Cinderella and her Animal Friends: a Book about Kindness* endorsed the feminine virtues of care and compassion. However by then Disney's perpetuation of old fashioned gender roles was under criticism and authors were writing revisionist tales often employing humour and swapping the gender roles of the main characters. For example in Babette Cole's *Prince Cinders* the big bullying-brothers are punished by becoming House Fairies and do all the house work, while Princess Lovelypenny's true love will fit a pair of lost trousers, not shoes. In Ellen Jackson's American *Cinder Edna*, Cinderella's neighbour Edna shows backbone, saving up her bird-cage cleaning money to go to the ball and travelling in loafers by bus to find her Mr Right. In a swipe at the story itself and its message of finding the ideal partner, Roald Dahl in *Revolting Rhymes* makes Cindy's Prince dumb and vicious and her ugly sister cunning, so she regrets her wish to marry the prince and asks the fairy godmother for a decent man instead. Along similar revisionary lines are James Garner's *Politically Correct Bedtime Stories*, Aislinn O'Loughlin's *Cinderella's Fella*, and the award winning Shirley Hughes' *Ella's Big Chance*.

For the confident reader, the British author Philip Pullman produced a spin-off tale where the hero was one of the rats who the fairy godmother made into a pageboy to accompany her to the ball (Pullman). The boy's

adventures were made into a television series in 2001 and the tie-in edition has a flash on the cover announcing this fact, next to the author's Carnegie medal and Smarties prize. For the young teenage group the American author Gregory Maguire's fantasy *Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister* is narrated by her (possibly autistic) older sister. Maguire's tale problematises beauty, making Iris/Cinderella plain and her second stepsister beautiful. It is set in the Netherlands where Iris's stepfather is a tulip grower, her sexually-ambiguous prince is a painter, and it rejects the 'happy-ever-after' ending of the fairy tale. Like Pullman's story, Maguire's too was adapted for television.

While Cinderella has provided creative stimulus for the young adult, teen and older audience, it has long been used in reading schemes. Ann Jungman's *Cinderella and the Hot Air Balloon* illustrated by Russell Ayto is aimed at this market and made 'Suitable for the English [and Scottish] Curriculum'. Similarly Shirley Climo and Loretta Krupinski's *Irish Cinderlad* is recommended for ages 5 to 9. The Collection has a number of Vera Southgate's easy reading Cinderella texts for Ladybird books in editions illustrated first by Eric Winter, then Brian Price-Thomas, then Paul Finn over a period of 40 years.

But perhaps the most telling adaption in the Collection is Anne Sexton's poem 'Cinderella' in her poetry volume *Transformations* (first British edition). Its black humour is not intended for children. It opens with an acknowledgement of the familiar get-lucky, get-rich story of the ordinary person—plumber, the nursemaid, the milkman, the charwoman—who 'makes a pile'. So Cinderella's wishes are made true under the tree on her mother's grave. The Grimm brothers' bloody feet remain in the poem betraying the stepsisters: 'That's the way with amputations. /They just don't heal up like a wish' while Cinderella's shoe fits 'like a love letter into its envelope.' But Sexton asks darkly, what did she wish for? Answering that they lived creepily 'like two dolls in a museum case' never arguing, never aging, preserved like dolls, Sexton shows us through the poem the despair in this loss of idealism.

Collectables and play items

Sexton's dark eerie dolls reflect her imagination not the delight and glamour we see in the iconic objects of the story reproduced as collectables and play items. One such is the godmother and fairy wands which have to sparkle to show magical power. They are a catalyst of the imagination and transform common objects into desirable ones. In childhood play they transform a bucket into a ship, or a cardboard box into