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Imprints from Book Illustration and Advertisement: Eco-Sources in Walt Disney’s Sleeping Heroine Films

ABSTRACT

While Disney's sleeping heroine films—*Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) and *Sleeping Beauty* 1959)—are often dismissed as repeating a capitalistic narrative, the rapid acceleration of environmental degradation across the globe is grounds enough to reexamine both films with an ecocritical lens. Using an interpictorial approach, this article offers a new way of viewing how nature was constructed in the films' storyboards while tracing connections with period-specific advertisements. Illustrations of wild nature expand the possibilities for troubling Disney's brand of villainized wilderness. But period advertisements implicate humankind's growing responsibility for the harm done to the planet.

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Fairy tales are filled with journeys of hope and transformation where human characters travel through wild forests and mountains populated by diverse creatures. Illustrations within the storybook tradition often draw attention to these moments of animal-human interaction within naturescapes: in the Grimm brothers' anthologies, mysterious critters race through the woods with Snow White in "Schneewittchen," and forest animals fall into a deathly slumber along with Sleeping Beauty in "Dornröschen," only to awaken with her one hundred years later. From the nineteenth century onwards, many of the illustrations of the two tales have narrowed in on the scenes of deathly slumber, showing Snow White as she is visited by a dove, a raven, an owl and other forest animals and Sleeping Beauty in a thicket of thorns, surrounded by her sleeping court and its animals.[1] This essay focuses on nature-inspired images in Disney versions of these sleeping heroine stories where animal-human interactions are also central. In *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) and *Sleeping Beauty* (1959) the animal casts of characters come alive in forests and cottage settings where they behave like animals but also clean, cook, sing, dance, run, fly, and to varying degrees they succumb to the domestication of the wild. Drawing upon fairy-tale illustrations and related imagery in print culture, the contrast between the semi-domesticated and wild characters holds an uneasy place within these films.[2]

[1] A rich visual tradition for these stories existed prior to the Disney versions. Notable illustrators of these stories include Ludwig Grimm in 1825, Albert Henschel in 1871, Lancelot Speed in 1890, and Philipp Grot Johann in 1893, Robert Weise in 1890, Walter Crane in 1876, and Gustav Doré in circa 1867.

[2] By bookending the stories told in the films with the opening and closing of their titular picture books, Disney attempts to apply this contrast, and his authorship, over the entirety of the fairy tale tradition (Haase 223; Harris 307-310).

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In addition to considering the picture-book tradition, I propose to focus on period-specific American advertisements as part of the interpictoriality or image-to-image relationship that contributes to the visual landscapes of the Disney fairy tale films.[3] The relationship of the visual language of the films and American advertising in the pre- and post-war periods has not been discussed, nor have the ecological implications of this relationship been considered. By taking an interpictorial approach, I show how visual sources in the films' storyboarding documentation resonate with period-specific advertisements and, advancing an ecocritical perspective, I explore how the villainization of wilderness and glorification of efforts to domesticate it in the Disney films endorse the unfettered consumption habits that have been tied to the destruction of the environment. This interpictorial analysis of the nature-inspired images in the films, the sources upon which they directly draw, and contemporaneous advertisements aims to shed light on the imbrication of Disney's popular 1937 and 1959 fairy-tale films within consumer culture. The implications of these visual relationships feed into the consumption-oriented human imprint on the environment that reached new levels of harm in the decades before and especially after the Second World War. I frame this analysis first by situating it within scholarship focused on Disney's representations of nature. Later in the essay, I show how these Disney films implicated viewers in environmental destruction for profit and how, when seen through a contemporary lens, they also contain ecocritical warnings.

[3] Interpictoriality is an offshoot of intertextuality used to emphasize how image-to-image relationships found within the cross-fertilization between genres inform the wider narrative possibilities of a story. In the study of book illustration there is a need to differentiate image-image relationships from the intertext between text-image and text-text pairings (Harris 31-2). Often these visual cross references have much to reveal on issues of age, gender, race, animality, and, in this case, the environment.

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THE DISNEY VERSION OF NATURE AND PICTURE BOOKS

Disney Scholarship: Ecocriticism and Picture Books

Whereas fairy-tale-related Disney scholarship from Marxist- and feminist-oriented criticism has focused on the films' oppressive underpinnings,[4] recent ecocritical and audience-centered approaches add nuance to the discussion. In particular, the ecocritical Disney scholarship that grew out of increased environmental awareness in the 1990s takes a closer look at the animals. Films such as *Bambi* (1942) and the *True-Life Adventures* (1948-60), and to some extent *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* present a troubling, sanitized version of the wilderness (King 62; Whitley 15; see also Lutts; Roy) and encourage empathy towards and mutual coexistence with *certain* animals such as squirrels and rabbits with large baby-like eyes and cuddly characteristics (Murray and Heumann 50; see also Whitley; King). King points out how the Disney nature documentary series, the *True-Life Adventures*, generates a dichotomy between the villains and the protagonists: the "spiders, vultures, snakes and wolverines" and wolves and coyotes become

[4] Favoring the subversive potential of pre-Disney fairy tales found in literary traditions, Jack Zipes has argued that supporting-role characters, which include the dwarfs in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarf* and the fairies in *Sleeping Beauty*, represent the hardworking Americans who are the consumers of Disney films and merchandise and by extension of the clothes, shoes and household items that maintain the capitalist status-quo ("De-Disneyfying Disney" 24-25; *Subversion* 199, 205). For second-wave feminist scholar Marcia Lieberman, the princess films indoctrinate young girls into mimicking the heroines who passively wait for marriage and wealth (Lieberman, 186-88). Moreover, Naomi Wood argues that Disney's fairy tale films would remain dismissed in fairy tale scholarship if it were not for questions of audience agency and the sub-narratives to the capitalist plot (Wood, 27; see also Joosen, 50-60; Giroux and Pollock), which include interspecies antics between wild and semi-domestic creatures.

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villains in contrast to the "chipmunks, beavers, and prairie dogs" (King 66). The narrator's descriptions of the coyote as a wandering foreigner and prairie dogs as hardworking settlers fit into a broader pattern where manipulative forms of anthropomorphizing in Disney films reoccur (Harris 295). Ecocritical scholar David Whitley highlights how the binary oppositions between two sides of nature in *Snow White*, characterized by the heroine, the villain, and their respective domains, converge in two scenes: wild elements appear when Snow White runs through the menacing forest and later when she cleans the cottage with the help of her animal companions (20-29). Although Whitley and others dismiss *Sleeping Beauty* as being merely derivative of *Snow White*, important here is Whitley's example of reading against the villainization of wild nature.

To further the ecocritical dimensions of studying Disney's fairy tale animations, Robin Allan's extensive archival research is also foundational. In *Walt Disney and Europe*, Allan presents how picture books that Disney collected during his European travels (1935-51)[5] — books with illustrations by Gustave Doré, Beatrix Potter, Arthur Rackham, de Grandville, Kay Nielsen, and Wilhelm Busch—directly informed the storyboards for his films (Allan 7, 205). In addition, stylistic features from Pre-Raphaelitism to German Expressionism entered Disney's carefully crafted narrative formula: plotted gags form the bulk of the story, and a chase scene leading to the villain's demise and a happily-ever-after marriage marks the story's end (Allan 16). While Allan's point about how the bulk of the story and the illustrative sources come together to generate the films' broad appeal is well taken, it is worth taking his reference book a step further. For example, the picture book tradition and related print culture provide grounds to view Disney's sleeping heroine films in a nuanced relationship to each other.

[5] Disney's travels to Europe took place in 1935, 1946, 1949 and 1951.

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The illustrations that have long accompanied fairy tales have great meaning-making potential; yet, pivotal monographs and anthologies on fairy tales from the fields of modern languages and literature have tended to include pictures as second-thought decorative elements (Harris 22-23). This gap might have been addressed in Balaka Basu's scholarship on children's and young adult literature, specifically her segue into fairy tales and picture books, were it not for her focus on the idea of national narratives, which leads to her argument that illustrations limit readers and impede their imaginations (443).[6] In another example, describing how fairy tale scholarship and animal studies have "not extensively intersected" (225), Pauline Greenhill and Leah Claire Allen discuss such stories as "Red Riding Hood" for how the wolf cross-dresses, but illustrations and related visuals that render wolves in various adaptions are not part of their discussion.[7] While drawing upon ecocritical Disney scholars, it is worth paying closer attention to the pictorial potency of illustrations within the films.[8]

[6] It should be noted that such a position is unsupported by visual analysis despite Basu's reference to Nikolajeva and Scott on the polysemic possibilities of text-image pairings.

[7] Illustration studies scholar Julia Thomas aptly advises, "the study of illustration needs to begin by advocating the relevance of illustration and countering the all-too-common misconceptions to be found in scholarly work, the sorts of misconceptions that view illustration as straightforward" (6).

[8] This essay builds upon my doctoral thesis which pays close attention to the visual evolution of fairy tales in illustrated children's books and related genres from the late seventeenth century to Disney in the twentieth century. The thesis chapter on Disney discusses how the use of book illustration and painting (both fairy tale and non-fairy tale sources) in Disney's *Cinderella* informs a reversible Manichean dichotomy between good versus evil and wilderness versus domesticity (Harris 280-81, 290-95, 298-302).

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Illustrating the Domesticated and the Wild Sides of Nature

The opposition between heroines and villains in the sleeping heroine films, *Snow White* and *Sleeping Beauty*, is respectively based on different sources, genres, and styles. The youthfulness of Snow White as both girl and woman emerges from the hybridization of the Pre-Raphaelite female body in deep slumber, the cinematic girlish face of Judy Garland, Shirley Temple and Mary Pickford, and the charm of animal-human interactions from illustrations of "Snow White" (Allan 59). Although the sources for Sleeping Beauty's figure are less clear, she appears as a narrow-waisted figure in a full-circle skirt – conceivably transposed from Vogue or McCall packages for 1950s sewing patterns. Meanwhile, the maturity of both middle-aged villains, the Queen in *Snow White* and Maleficent in *Sleeping Beauty*, draws from Lady Macbeth, the Big Bad Wolf, the femme fatale figure in film noir, and witches in historical illustrations (Allan 8, 52). Allan's European-focused archival documentation for *Sleeping Beauty*'s storyboarding sources found in book illustration and cinema is much less extensive than for *Snow White*, and yet, the earlier film directly informed the later one. Ominous scenes, such as the prison sequence, which were cut from *Snow White*, were added to the domain of the villain Maleficent in *Sleeping Beauty* (Allan 235). A closer look at the sources used in the villain and heroine's domains in the two films illustrates how the association of the wild with villains and the domesticated with heroines is repeated.

The heroine's domesticated realm in Disney's *Snow White* takes direct inspiration from nineteenth-century illustrator Ludwig Richter (1803-84).[9] Richter's "Schneewittchen" (c. 1853) is one illustration, as Allan notes (39), which directly informs the storyboard. Significantly, it

[9] Richter is one of the illustrators most cited by Robin Allan.

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sentimentalizes animal-human tenderness: framed by curlicues of foliage, Schneewittchen steps out from a woodland cottage with her fruit basket. Greeted by birds and deer, she pauses to caress a doe who in turn reaches to kiss her cheek (see Figure 1). In a distinctive Biedermeier-style, Richter's woodblock prints showcase everyday moments in the idyllic forests associated with German fairy tales. Disney's *Snow White* transforms this gentle romanticization of human-animal interactions in nature into a series of moving images featuring a cast of North American forest animals—the deer and the songbirds alongside an owl, quail, raccoon, squirrels, rabbits, chipmunk, and a turtle—who, taken by the heroine's charms, gather around her. With their neotenic features, big eyes and cheeks and wobbly bodies, the animals draw from Disney's earlier repertoire of black and white shorts. In their movements, they show the same anatomical attention to how songbirds fly, squirrels climb, and rabbits hop with the added feature of color and the charm otherwise found in Richter's illustrations. To achieve these effects, Disney's animators adopted technicolor and studied live forest animals for their anatomy and locomotion, and illustrations for mood and setting (see Holt; Peri).

By the second sleeping heroine film, the summer-time forest has become especially pleasant in its domesticity, albeit with an ominous twist. A reduced cast of species reappears in *Sleeping Beauty*—the heroine's songbirds, owls, rabbits and squirrels as well as the villain's raven. The heroine's companions enter an altered forest generated by the stylization of leaves, circular treetops, and flattened plains. As one of the few documented sources for this heroine's realm (Allan 43), the Limbourg brothers' Medieval book of hours transposes a tapestry-like pattern in the aerial view of a cultivated landscape that stretches out into a forest. As the camera zooms in, the photo-realistic precision in the rendering of the grainy texture of the bark and the lushness of the veins within the leaves, and the painterly vibrancy of the colors from emerald-to-

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neon green become visible. This windless forest becomes the set for the animal-human scene: the animals steal the clothes of the encroaching prince: the rabbits hop away with his boots, the owl flies off with his cloak, and the squirrel holds his hat, thus forming a hair extension with its furry tail. In a delightful moment, the princess and animals dance an interspecies waltz across the forest floor until Prince Philip tosses the birds aside and takes their place. At first the princess is startled by the change but eventually the two waltz together. The scene of two humans dancing in the stillness of the perfectly groomed and brightly-colored forest is excessively cheery—in sharp contrast with the atmosphere in the villainized character's domain.

The evil Queen and her terrain in *Snow White* extend into *Sleeping Beauty* with Maleficent and her Forbidden Mountain. Envisioned as "controlling the elements, with storm, wind, and lightning" (Allan 52), the Queen and raven in *Snow White* appear reconfigured in *Sleeping Beauty* along with the rocky terrain and castle. The documented sources include Gustave Doré's (1832-83) dramatic narrative scenes for Dante's *Inferno*, William Busch's (1832-1908) comedic illustrations of ravens, Arthur Rackham's (1867-1939) fantastical forests, and early gothic and German Expressionist cinema and its influence in Hollywood (Allan 49-50 for Doré, 55 for Busch, 57 for German Expressionist film).[10] Maleficent's dramatic makeup, angular wolf-like eyes, horned head and black cape, which mirrors the feathers of her raven companion, turn the femme fatale figure into a creaturely version of the earlier villain. Meanwhile, the environments surrounding the two villains—the Queen and Maleficent—draw from illustrations of craggy rocks, stormy waters and disturbed forests. The vilification of

[10] For *Snow White* sources, Allan briefly references Rackham's illustrations and German Expressionism in film in general terms and notes four specific film titles: *Metropolis* (Lang, 1926), *Dracula* (Browning, 1931), *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (Mamoulian, 1931), and *Frankenstein* (Whale, 1931).

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Maleficent in *Sleeping Beauty* is heightened through a series of cinematic references: her garment flutters across the screen like Mephisto's cape in *Faust* (Murnau, 1926), and her hilltop castle echoes the eerie ruins in *Frankenstein* (Whale, 1931) and *Nosferatu* (Murnau, 1922).[11] In other words, the moralistic separation between the villainized wilderness and domesticated nature that appears in *Snow White* is amplified in *Sleeping Beauty.*

The villainization of the wilderness can, nonetheless, readily become unfixed from within the inspirational nineteenth-century illustrations that were part of the storyboarding process. This can be seen in Gustave Doré's illustrations that informed the Disney films. His "Suicides" for Dante's *Inferno* (see Figure 2) is a dramatic wood engraving that presents the torment felt by human bodies that writhe and glow as their limbs and hair metamorphose into branches and twigs that recede into the darkened forest. The raking light that carves out the tree torso, its gnarly bark and brittle twigs does not vilify the forest, even in hell, because of the attention given to the suffering trees. Doré's image highlights the pain felt by the human-arboreal figures, eliciting pathos for their agony and sympathy for their lives. Indeed, there is an admiration for nature that traverses Doré's oeuvre, including his illustrated fairy tales, which Disney would have been aware of through his book collecting practice. The scene of guests and servants frozen in slumber for a hundred years in Doré's "La Belle au bois dormant" reveals the artist's detailed attention to the botanical features of the mushrooms, cobwebs, thorns, and leaves that fill every

[11] In Allan's brief discussion of *Sleeping Beauty*, his specific references include illustrations from the Limbourg's *Book of Hours* (1412), cinematic adaptations of Shakespeare, namely *Henry V* (Oliver, 1944), and Disney's earlier *Snow White* (233, 235). He does not mention the cinematic parallel between *Sleeping Beauty* and specific film titles within or inspired by German Expressionism.

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nook and cranny (see Figure 3). These natural elements allude to the passage of time and the growth that occurs after death and decay, adding mystery rather than villainy to the scene.

Inspirational for the sleeping heroine films, Arthur Rackham's forests add feeling and texture to the wild scenes. In particular, I note how the staging of Snow White's fright through the woods in Gustaf Tenggren's storyboard drawing for Disney's film maps onto the layout of Rackham's illustration of dark-haired Bartalda in *Undine* (see Figure 4).[12] I am comparing Rackham's "Bertalda in the Black Valley" with Tenggren's storyboard images of Snow White's run through the woods (see Allan 51), images that can also be retrieved with a Google Image search for **Tenggren AND snow white AND storyboard AND woods**. Rackham's illustration and Disney's storyboard feature a centrally-positioned woman racing through a dark valley forest as the branches of trees reach out to grab her cape. While Snow White's fear turns the swamp and forest into a nightmare, the branches echo the whimsy that best describes Rackham's unique style of anthropomorphic trees, fairies, and goblins. Trees of various species—hawthorn (known as fairy trees), oak, willow, pine—appear across Rackham's photomechanically reproduced muted watercolors and pen and ink outlines. The outlined treetops become wispy, like hair in the wind, and the swirls of bark and branches gain human-like features. Eyes, nose, ears, and fingers indicate the trees' ability to sense humans and other critters, revealing how the forest knows of

[12] Asides from including a comment that Disney artists working during the production of *Snow White* admired Rackham (5), Allan does not indicate specific sources used from Rackham's book illustrations for the storyboarding of these two films. Although he mentions Doré's "The Suicides" in connection with Snow White's journey through the woods, Rackham's illustrations for *Undine* have just as much, if not more, of a presence in this scene.

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Snow White's presence. In these ways, illustrations by Rackham and Doré inform the multisensory and mysterious sides of nature in Disney.

My point then is that while dramatic and fanciful illustrations by nineteenth-century illustrators permeate the darkened sphere of villainy in the Disney films, they do not villainize nature. On the contrary, the nineteenth-century works approach nature's uncontrollable forces with wonder. Sympathy towards nature in these earlier works suggest that humankind's encroaching imprint on the earth may cause critters and the trees to respond with fright and agitation. Positioned in Disney, agitation appears when the haunted facial characteristics of the forest transform into the neotenic features of the creatures in *Snow White* and when, in *Sleeping Beauty,* the animal-heroine waltz is juxtaposed with the semi-cute, semi-ghoulish goons who dance around the fire in a frenzy. Pointing out details in the Disney films and storyboards—the agitation of the animals and trees, the manipulation of nature-inspired illustrations to suit the Disney version of nature, and the heightened villainy and domestication in the second film—reveals a troubling bias in the presentation of nature, which holds environmental implications beyond the films themselves.

The interpictorial analysis between Disney's storyboarding and historical book illustrations thus far highlights the artificiality in the human-imposed division between wild and domestic nature in the films. By viewing Disney's moving images with another aspect of visual culture, that of contemporary advertisement with the movies, corporate marketing and everyday consumption habits that infringe upon the wild begin to unfold. As this infringement becomes increasingly visible, so does consumer and corporate responsibility for our heightened destructive actions to the environment during the 1930-60s when the films were released and popularized.

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THE ADVERTISEMENT LAYER IN *SNOW WHITE* AND *SLEEPING BEAUTY*

Advertisement-fairy tale studies draw from Raymond Williams's pivotal article "Advertising: The Magic System" (1961), which politicizes the history of advertising. Accordingly, ads once appeared as textual listings in newspapers or as medicinal promises made by quacks. By the late nineteenth century, advertisement agents, whom Williams describes as magicians, started working within the magical system known as large-scale capitalism to offer transformation through the consumption of goods. These modern ads went beyond stating the functional purpose of the product being sold, such as that a washing machine washes clothes to promise more (Williams). Eventually financed by mega-corporations that monopolize the market, advertising transformed buyers into consumers through promises of a more glamorous life; this helped secure a constant demand for goods and a robust profit margin for corporations.

Magic, transformation, familiar characters, and happy endings lend themselves to the advertiser's pitch (Haase), so it is no surprise that fairy tales and advertisements are well acquainted with each other (Weigeldt 154; see also Bacchilega and Rieder; Haase). With insights from Williams, Weigeldt describes how a Zanussi washing machine ad from the 2000s confirms gender stereotypes: in keeping with the Cinderella story, the mother in the ad stands in for a fairy godmother and the washing machine serves as the wand that transforms a simple costume into a gown fit for a princess; at the same time, the modern convenience of a washing machine increases the time for mother-daughter relations (Weigeltdt 156). While fairy-tale-advertisement studies have tended to look at commercials and or contemporary print culture (Weigeldt, 155; see also Haase; Bacchilega and Rieder), the connective tissue between fairy tales and print advertising in general deserves closer attention.

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The marriage between ads and fairy tales can be traced to the quackery of the nineteenth century. Amongst the fairy-tale toy books that appeared on the burgeoning children's book market, *The History of Cinderella* (published by Clerkenwell and printed by Goode 1859-79) joins the story's full-page illustrations of domestic work with front matter ads for ointments, serums, pills, soaps, and other toy books. Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup is a full-paragraph textual ad in this fairy tale book, which pulls at the mother's emotional strings: "Advice to Mothers. – Are you broken of your rest by a sick child, suffering with pain of cutting teeth?" It continues by declaring that the serum will relieve the child's suffering, induce sleep, and is essential to motherhood. These manipulative medicinal promises recall Williams's claims of quackery in the sale of medicine-like substances, which beckoned the modern age of advertisement. By the 1880s and 1890s, the age of the ad had arrived: advertising associations backed the agencies in the legitimacy of selling all kinds of products in what had become a fully developed information system designed to persuade consumers conditioned by large-scale capitalism (Williams).

The possibilities for the cross-fertilization of fairy tales and advertisement expanded in 1930s America. By this point companies—De Beers (jewelry and mining), Procter and Gamble (household goods), General Mills and General Foods (grain products), and Disney (media) amongst others—relied on advertising agencies to survive, and even thrive during, the Great Depression. Disney Studio expanded its production of shorts, began the four-year undertaking of *Snow White*, and lent its characters, Mickey, Minnie, and the Three Little Pigs to product advertisements such as General Foods Kellogg's cornflakes (Schmidt). In turn, Disney's animators were encouraged to seek inspiration out in the world (see Allan; Holt; Peri), leaving much room for exploring the relationship between Disney's classic fairy-tale princess films and

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the print culture that surrounds jewelry, fashion, food products, household goods, and home appliances.

Mining for Capitalism's Presence

The association between diamonds and the marital happily-ever-after in *Snow White* as the prototype for Disney's princess fairy-tale films sets the stage for one of the most enduring advertisement campaigns in American consumer history. At the time of *Snow White's* premiere in December 1937 and theatrical release in 1938, diamonds were not the *sine qua non* for middle-class engagement rituals, but they were soon to be (Epstein; Maier 174; Pequignot 10). To the tune of the dwarfs' lyrics, "a million diamonds shine" chiming across American theaters, movie attendance during the Depression "averaged 60-75 million people per week" (Mollet 112). Situated as one of the most popular films of the era ("Highest-Grossing Animation at the Domestic Box Office"), Snow White's effort to face her fears, clean up her environment, and never give up hope helped Americans face their economic fears, romantic yearnings, and dreams (Mollet 115). In other words, the film tailored itself to its target audience.

The mining scene in Disney's *Snow White* offers an image of hard work that departs from the nineteenth-century publishing tradition of the story. In the various versions and editions of the story from the Grimm brothers, the seven unnamed dwarfs mine for either unspecified ore or gold, but not diamonds. Disney's version names the dwarfs and gives them social characteristics: Grumpy, Dopey, Doc, Happy, Bashful, Sneezy, and Sleepy are caricatures of everyday white American men who steadily work outside of the home, accumulating wealth in the form of diamonds and remaining clueless about household chores. They travel through a lush forest to work a day shift in an airy mine; to the tick of the clock, they sing:

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dig, dig, dig, dig, dig, dig (repeat)

In a mine the whole day through

It is what we like to do

It ain't no trick to get rich quick

If we dig, dig, dig with a shovel or a pick

In a mine; In a mine (repeat)

Where a million diamonds shine!

In their rudimentary assembly line, four dwarfs pick away at the earth as Sneezy carts the goods, which emerge from the earth as perfectly cut and polished stones rather than earthy kimberlite. Stationed at his inspection table, Doc tosses aside rubies and small diamonds: only the biggest and clearest will do. Such diamonds are large enough for Dopey to stuff into his eye-sockets, forming a kaleidoscopic vision of wealth—the Disneyfied American Dream. When the clock strikes five—in accordance with Henry Ford's normalization of the nine to five workday—Dopey throws the rocks into the mountain's safe, which is inscribed with the letters "v a u l t." With this last step, labor transforms into capital, and the dwarfs return home. This ideal home is not complete without the charms of the female heroine, Snow White, who cooks and cleans and teaches them basic hygiene, only to later find herself carried away into marriage by a prince.

The portrayal of the bride-to-be in idyllic nature and the mining scene in Disney's *Snow White* were part of the visual imaginary or image-scape when, in 1938, the mining corporation De Beers hired an advertising agency to develop a strategy to increase diamond sales based on market research. In developing the strategy, the agency, N. W. Ayers, made use of two significant findings from their study of American consumers: 1) "the best way to increase the diamond trade in the United States was to convince men that buying a diamond engagement ring

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for their fiancées was a necessary way to prove their affection" and 2) "the great middle class is the backbone of the diamond market" (Pequignot 11). The De Beers-Ayers ads that followed successfully targeted middle-class women as recipients and men as buyers.

The technique used in diamond ads from 1939 onwards manipulated the gem's representational power. To overcome concerns about the relative worthlessness of diamonds when resold, De Beers-Ayers developed textual narratives about a diamonds' intergenerational value and symbolic worth. By the 1940s, the ads became full-page colored portraits[13] typically depicting a relatively attractive white woman passively waiting in a landscape for her hardworking fiancé-to-be. While the fiancé does not appear in the portrait, these ads prompted men to turn their labor into capital and spend large sums of money on a perfectly cut and clear diamond to prove their worth. The famous slogan "a diamond is forever" appeared on these portraits from 1947 onwards, transforming the corporation's market control on the gems into "universally recognized tokens of wealth, power, and romance," as investigative journalist Edward Jay Epstein put it (see also Bergenstock and Maskulka).

Diamonds owe their value to an underlying cross-fertilization between advertisement culture and Disney fairy-tale films. As per Maier's discussion of "Princess Brides and Dream Weddings" from the 1920s to 1990s, the Disneyfied rags-to-riches princess bride fantasy associated with *Cinderella* (1950) has bolstered the wedding industry's focus on the middle-class bride with her white dress, cake, and engagement jewelry (174). To this end, both of Disney's sleeping heroines maintain tropes of the Cinderella figure: Snow White cooks and cleans and

[13] In the 1940s De Beers began commissioning artists – Leona Wood, Gerald Brockhurst, Charles Rain, Herbert Saslow, and even Salvador Dali and Picasso – who could skillfully revive the prestige of Renaissance, Baroque, and Neo-Classical portraiture.

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Sleeping Beauty wears peasant clothes and helps out by berry picking, and they both end up marrying Prince Charming. The parallels between the De Beers portraits and these Disney heroines are striking. Surrounded by trees and glistening stars in pristine nature, the unmarried woman who spends her time waiting for wealth and love recalls the passive waiting role that Disney's princesses play. Poised to sit for a portrait to showcase her estate, the princess-like bride-to-be looks beyond the picture plane with a crown of diamond-like stars in Leona Wood's painting for De Beers-Ayers' advertising tear sheet "Corona Borealis: A Diamond is Forever." Meanwhile the text in the ad's margins emphasizes the promise to "keep love's dreams forever fresh and new" so long as the buyer seeks out a quality gem valued by color, cut, and clarity from jewellers who supply De Beers' diamonds (see Figure 5). In Disney, the princesses similarly look outwards toward the distant castle in song and longing within a culture of corporate marketing regarding gender roles.

Cleaning at the speed of magic

Disney's *Snow White* and *Sleeping Beauty* pay an unusual degree of attention to domestic work. In a departure from the Grimm brothers, Disney has Snow White in rags mopping the palace floors, sweeping the dwarf's cottage, doing their laundry, baking them a pie, and later teaching them how to use soap. In the Grimms' versions of "Schneewittchen," the dwarfs are perfectly capable of cleaning up after themselves, although, they offer shelter to a frightened stranger in exchange for her help cooking and cleaning; their mention of household chores is brief in contrast to their lengthy treatment in the narrative of the Queen's three attempts to murder her rival. While the Grimms' "Schneewittchen" focuses on the Queen's evil actions, their "Aschenputtel" emphasizes the heroine's toil with her unending list of household chores, as does Disney's *Snow White.* In the published versions of the "Sleeping Beauty" story by Giambattista

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Basile, Charles Perrault, and the Grimm brothers, there are no cleaning scenes, and, yet Disney introduced the cottage scene of cooking, cleaning, and dressmaking in the film version of *Sleeping Beauty*. These added domestic scenes call for further interpictorial analysis of the films and the surrounding advertisement culture of the 1930s and 1950s.

The bathing scene in *Snow White* (1937) normalizes the consumption of household goods when it encourages audience members to laugh at the dwarfs' first attempt to bathe with soap. Following Snow White's insistence that they wash before dinner, the unbranded soap bar becomes a magical object during Doc's instructional song. "Bluddleuddleuddle . . . Pick up the soap . . ." because, as he explains, it is "good for the soul." As six of the seven dwarfs clean themselves by following the splashing, rubbing, and scrubbing instructions, Dopey swallows the bar of soap, which cleanses him both inside and out. The transformative properties of the soap invoke Procter and Gamble's unrelenting Ivory soap advertisement campaign during the 1930s. Geared to women and men, one such soap ad depicting a man in a tub associates his "healthy dive into a brimming Ivory bath" with washing the "blues and troubles" and the "dust and grime" away ("Feeling Blue ..?: You'll Cheer up .. in Pure Foam! Ivory Soap"). Turning back to the dwarfs' cleaning scene, Grumpy, the resistant dwarf, is forcefully dunked into the tub, scrubbed, and brushed. Soon thereafter, he becomes less of a curmudgeon, which echoes the promise made by ads from the soap and detergent industry that soap will cleanse negativity and augment hygiene standards. Grumpy's bathing scene in the film even served to promote early Disney's merchandise, as exemplified by "Snow White's Own Soap: Perfumed with Fairyland flowers" (1938), a box of soap bars branded with the Disney characters.

The references to cleaning and household goods are amplified in *Sleeping Beauty*. The three fairies—Merryweather, Flora, and Fauna—prepare for Aurora's sixteenth birthday by

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attempting to clean the house, bake a cake, and design a dress. Notably, Aurora, Little Briar Rose, and Rose are all names for Sleeping Beauty. When the fairies first try to do these things without using magic, their plans fail terribly: the cake melts into a blue puddle, dirty dishes stack up, and the dress is so ill-fitted that it flops on Merryweather's body. Deciding to "think of Rose, and what she'll think of this mess," the fairies fetch their wands and electric sparks start to fly. Flora uses magic to manufacture a ready-to-wear gown, and the mop instantly cleans the floors at Merryweather's bequest. In this scene, there are at least three parallels to the surrounding advertisement culture of the 1950s: fashion, home appliances, and cake. Ads for sewing machines, electric vacuums, washing machines, and electrically enhanced homes, as per General Electric's "Live Better Electrically" campaign, supported hundreds of electricity manufacturers who offered to advance the nation. The ads repeatedly conveyed the promise that women from white families could spend less time doing household chores and instead experience happiness in beautiful party outfits. Meanwhile, manufactured fashion made formal wear more affordable to the middle class. Then there was the cake.

The fairy named Fauna creates an instant cake by adding an egg to the flour, which instantly mixes itself, and then she decorates it with magical icing. The scene directly recalls how the General Mills' Betty Crocker brand used market research to maintain its competitive place in consumer households. By the 1950s, the instructions to "just add an egg" had become a powerful marketing tool for their instant cake mixes; market research showed that it recalled the gesture of making a homemade cake from scratch without the fuss (Park). Simple frosting recipes followed by premade icing mixes became the next new thing (Park), allowing General Mills' products to stand out. General Mills' *Betty Crocker's Cake Mix Magic* (1951) frosting recipes, which advertise the brand's cake mix boxes, and their "Angel Fluff Frosting Mix" (1957)

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ad for frosting mix packages exemplify this moment of novelty in corporate marketing (see Figures 6). In these ads, velvety layers of white or pink icing were easy to create and would give consumers (gendered as female) the sense that they were doing something extra special without actually doing much work. Returning to the Disney scene, Fauna uses magic to instruct the ingredients to follow the recipe book: the eggs instantly fold into the flour, leaving her with the time to ornately decorate the cake with magically made icing.

With twenty-two years of advertisement culture separating the release dates of the two Disney sleeping heroine films, the domestic scenes in *Snow White* (1937) and *Sleeping Beauty* (1959) express a shift from low to high technology. Whereas Snow White takes the time to cook and clean, the fairies in *Sleeping Beauty* have forgotten how to do domestic work—and they have little time on their hands. This shift parallels how mass-produced electronic products, such as sewing machines, vacuums, and dishwashers, and manufactured goods replaced the slower processes of making things and caring for them. The shift from low to high technology relied heavily on promises of happiness, advertisements for novelty items, the realities of busy lives in urban centers, and increased manufacturing speed. The magic at work within the crossover between Disney fairy tales and advertisements continues to stir an insatiable appetite for goods across industrial sectors, which has consequences.

VISUAL TENSIONS THAT ARISE IN THE ANTHROPOCENE

The advertisement layer opens up the possibility of looking at Disney's fairy-tale films in light of the Anthropocene (*anthropos*: human and *cene*: age), a recently recognized categorization of

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geological time.[14] In the cyclical forces at work within late capitalism, advertisement is a visual language that increases the desire for more in the recursive loop of supply and demand. The cogs of production, the frenzy of labor, and the branding of products generate more goods, more packaging, more consumption, more corporate profit, and more advertisement. This activity across global industries and Euro-American markets has caused adverse effects on the environment, which Anthropocenic time brings to light. Coined by climate change scientists Crutzen and Steffen, the *Great Acceleration* is a helpful term for humanistic analysis: it refers to the period of unfettered marketing, consumption and production, and ecological destruction following World War II.[15] With these temporal markers in place, we can place the release of

[14] Atmospheric chemist Paul J Crutzen started to popularize the Anthropocene as a term within scientific circles in the 2000s when he proposed that humankind has brought about a new geological epoch (14). His seminal paper identifies a range of factors strongly correlated with the rise in greenhouse gasses, namely increased industrial output and energy use and decreased forested areas and blue whale populations, as statistically significant (14-15). By 2017, the concept is used across the sciences, with discussions arising on when the Anthropocene began, issues of objectivity, the Anthropocene's underlying politics of urgency, and the metrics used from various fields (see Malhi). Outside of the sciences, the term captures the detrimental human impact on the natural world as a matter of magnitude (Malhi 93).

[15] The Great Acceleration is an apt term that emerges from a significant body of research data. In collaboration with Will Steffen, Grinewald, Crutzen et al. analyze both hemispheres for how atmospheric composition and human activity have changed from 1750-2000. The rate of human activity is measurable by dependent variables ranging from urban populations, GDP, paper consumption, foreign direct investment to transportation (851). They also use a range of metrics to analyze the state of the atmosphere

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Snow White (1937) before the Great Acceleration, and of *Sleeping Beauty* (1959) in the period of environmental urgency that followed the Second World War.

The environmental implications in *Snow White* are subtly present. The mining scene hides certain realities because it is more like an ad for American consumers, especially nine-to-five workers and their spouses than a depiction of what diamond mining actually looks like. A far cry from the razzle-dazzle of brightly lit gems and singsong in the lush Disneyfied forest, mining for gold and coal in the Americas and diamonds in the conflict zones of South Africa are dismal sights. Mines have a long history of exploiting human workers (especially local populations and racialized peoples) who work long hours for poor pay in dark, damp and even chemically toxic or explosive environments (Bardi 172–75).

Plundering the earth for mineral wealth takes a toll on the ecosystem and local inhabitants (Bardi 174–78). The environmental degradation associated with open-pit mining typically used to extract diamonds generates giant holes and massive debris piles that eat away at the mountains, vegetation, and animal life —all for relatively small quantities of commodity diamonds. Graham Leslie McCallum's image essay on De Beers Consolidated Mines' Kimberley mines in South Africa, known as the Big Hole, shows land that once supported trees and agriculture is now a scar upon the earth: miners, many of whom Black Africans, manually dug out 22,500,000 tons of earth, creating an open hole as deep as the Chrysler Building is tall, and then descended into it.[16] As some 14,504,566 carats of diamonds were extracted (McCallum),

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with dependant variables ranging from C02, N20, GH4 concentrations to global biodiversity (852). Spikes appear across their graphs from 1950 to 2000, revealing the accelerated rate of change.

[16] Over a hundred images of the Big Hole, dating from 1870 to 1975, are viewable on McCallum's blog site.

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directly benefitting the mining corporation's investors, a landscape of dust, debris, and death was left behind. The poetic lines by African miners associated with mining out the Big Hole are a far cry from the dwarfs' song.

A mouthful of blood she

spits into the air

She says, 'Men gone to DeBeers

They can come home dead

from the mines (Majara 119).

In stark contrast to how *Snow White* glorifies diamonds as sources of wealth in a pristine forest, actual mining pits—Kimberley Mine (active 1871-1914), Jagersfontein Mine (active 1870-1971), Namibia's mines (active circa 1915-90) —were invariably sites of destruction. Set in the environmental lens of the post-war era, the demand for resource extraction is one of many ways that we humans have imprinted ourselves in the landscape.

Produced during the Great Acceleration, *Sleeping Beauty* reveals an agrarian imprint that extends into the forests evoking the detrimental effects of large-scale agriculture on the wilderness. Disney artist Eyvind Earle separated the wild creatures associated with the so-called villain's realm from the domesticated forests surrounding Sleeping Beauty. Drawing upon medieval harvesting illustrations, namely "July: Castle Poitiers, Sheep-Shearing and Harvesting" and "September: Harvesting Grapes" from the aforementioned Limbourg brother's Book of Hours (1412), lands in Eyvind Earle's color key paintings and concept art, which can be retrieved with a Google Image search for **"Eyvind AND "concept art" AND "sleeping beauty,"** patch their way around a medieval castle. Flattened and squarish, they are evidence of

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deforestation, a process that gave way to agriculture and the harvesting of wheat and grapes (see Figure 7). Repositioned in the context of the nineteen fifties, *Sleeping Beauty*'s forest appears largely domesticated as it hosts the cottage where electric sparks fly and electrical appliances and sewing technologies make quick work of the chores.

Even if Disney romanticizes a distant forested past, traces of environmental damage emerge when the film is approached from an ecocritical perspective. Humankind's impact appears in the separated sphere of the wilderness, the artificiality of the domesticated forest, the busy-body activity in the mines and the cottages, the desire for novelty items, and the sugar and flour in the cake. These traces suggest major industry sectors—manufacturing alongside transportation and energy, mining, and farming that from the 1950s onwards are causing irreversible harm on the planet. Amongst the industries that destroy the wilderness, mining generates scar tissue as mass agriculture reduces the size of forests, woodlands, wetlands, and natural pastoral land. Corporate farming also contributes to increased ammonia and greenhouse gas emissions, soil erosion and biofuel production (Steffen et al. 850; see also OECD). Across these industries, the magic of advertisements and corporate greed fuel an unfettered cycle where the desire for consumption and profit at all costs destroys the planet and its inhabitants.

Trouble brews towards the end. Made visible by environmental consciousness, the furry that has grown within wild nature for over one hundred years manifests in the *Sleeping Beauty* film. In the primary plotline, Maleficent ensures that the princess pricks her finger, as per her recipe for deathly slumber; she then captures the prince to prevent the remedy of true love's kiss and turns into a dragon as he escapes. Seen through an ecocritical lens, Maleficent emerges from the fossilized stones and gargoyles from a bygone era as a reptilian figure with tentacle-like sensory spikes on her chin, neck, spine, and tail. With "tentacular powers" (160), she becomes

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the kind of expansive earth-bound figure that Donna Haraway refers to when considering what remains of the planet after mourning the irreversible losses to biodiversity. Releasing purple and green gases that float into the air, the dragon creates a cloud of cosmic horror as the bridges and forests that lay in her path burn to the ground. When considering how villainy in Disney is equivocal to wild creatures—the coyotes and spiders in the *True-Life Adventure Series*, the black cat in *Cinderella*, the raven companions in the sleeping heroine films and the dragon in *Sleeping Beauty*—a pattern emerges. It grounds Maleficent's backlash from the earth against all that humans have done. Indeed, the CGI and live action adaptation of *Sleeping Beauty*, titled *Maleficent* (2014), suggests as much by exploring how the wild character and her lands had long been mistreated and misunderstood by *man*kind. Betrayed by her lover and his ambition to overpower the wild, Maleficent sets out to protect the magical realm of nature from the devastation of human intrusion. Returning to the animated film, Maleficent's fumes are a warning sign: if human economic and ecological impact continues unabated, nothing will be left.

Conclusion

This article has brought to light an underlying tension between the wild and the domesticated in Disney's *Snow White* and *Sleeping Beauty* and the economically-driven and ecologically-detailed print culture that is embedded in and surrounds them. On the one hand, book illustrations of forests and their creaturely inhabitants by such illustrators as Gustave Doré, Arthur Rackham, and Ludwig Richter enter into the storyboarding of the films. From book illustration, Disney's films gain the emotive allure of encounters with forest animals, storms and overgrowth, the characterization between humans and animals, and the whimsy and sensing possibilities of trees. These illustrations recycle into the films, offering the visual grounds for sympathy towards nature's multidimensionality, even if the Disney narrative co-opts these sources into a

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Manichean separation between the wild and the domesticated. On the other hand, the films' domesticated landscapes, replete with a consumerist advertising layer, implicate consumers and viewers as contributing to the problems of this damaged planet. Indeed, imagery related to consumption and corporate profit at all costs—as expressed in advertisements associated with corporate farming, resource extraction, manufacturing, household goods and luxury products—brings to light an irreversible level of damage on the planet unless habits of privilege change.

The films' associated advertisement layer and the storyboarding's integration of nineteenth-century and medieval book illustrations come together in the ecological and economic momentum of print culture before the Great Acceleration and in the large-scale capitalism of the post-war era. Because an ecocritical approach alerts us to clues in these films' visual landscapes to wake up to the corporate and consumption-oriented scar tissue that is increasingly visible upon the earth, this essay supports reading the moving pictures with a sense of urgency. While continuing the de-villainization of the wild characters as others have done, it looks closely at the often-neglected book illustrations of the fairy-tale tradition and period advertisements that were adapted, manipulated, and cross-fertilized within the films. Finally, the interpictoriality between book illustrations of the forest scenes, dramatic cinematic moments, Disney's storyboarding, period-specific advertisement busts the myth of humankind's innocent gaze upon pristine nature when there has been so much harm done to the planet from major industries and consumption habits. There is, nonetheless, hope in the work of increasing visual awareness of the fantastical world of book illustration, to nature herself, and to the magic of Disney and advertisement if it leads to heighten responsibility amongst consumers and corporations alike and to increased sympathy towards both wild and semi-domesticated creatures. As awakening to the planetary crisis occurs, the visual relationships found within the Disneyfied versions of fairy-tale storylines

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offer ample room for further image and illustration studies within fairy-tale scholarship—so long as time remains.

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Illustrations

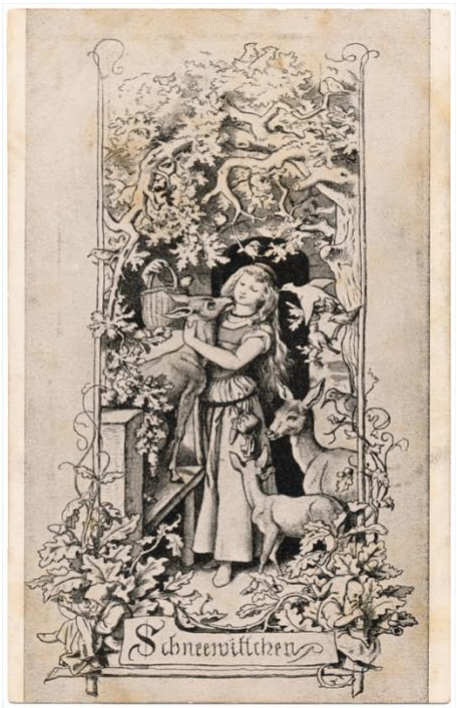

Fig. 1. Ludwig Richter, “Schneewittchen,” c. 1853, illustration reprinted on postcard, Verlag von Georg D.W. Callwey, München, c. 1900.

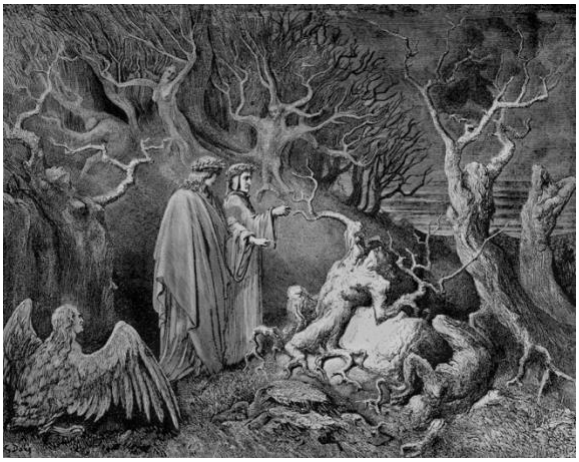

Fig. 2: Gustave Doré, “The Suicides,” 1861, illustration reprinted in a later edition, in Dante Alighieri and Gustave Doré, *The Doré Illustrations for Dante's Divine Comedy*, Dover Publications, 1976, 36.

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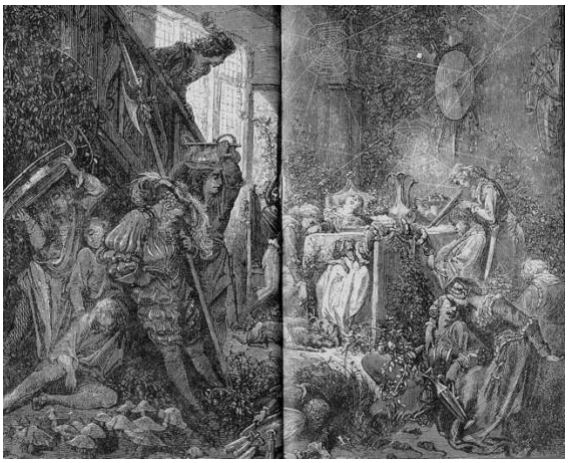

Fig. 3: Gustave Doré, "La Belle au bois dormant," 1867, illustration reprinted in a later edition, in Charles Perrault and Gustave Doré, *Contes*, Éditions Gérard & Cie, Verviers, 1962, 94-95.

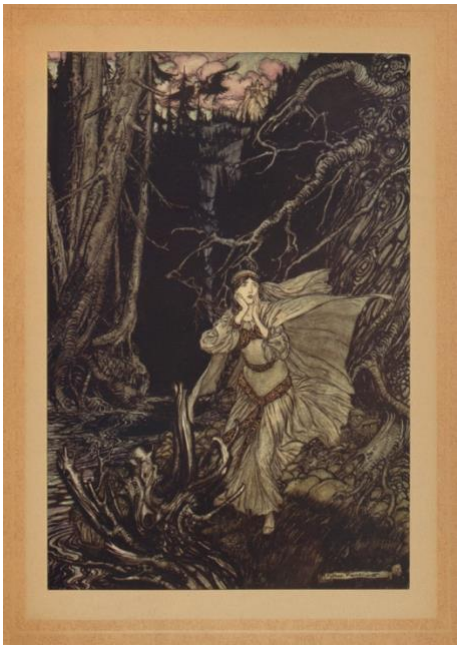

Fig. 4 Arthur Rackham, "Bertalda in the Black Valley," 1909, illustration reprinted in Friedrich de la Motte Fouqué and Arthur Rackham, *Undine*, Heinemann, 1925, 100-01. Courtesy of Rare Books and Special Collections, McGill University.

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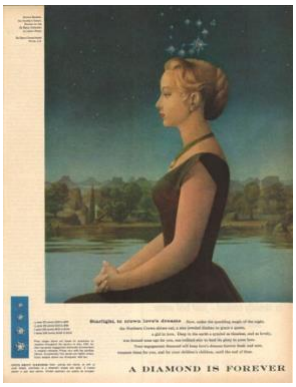

Fig. 5. "De Beers-Ayers, "Corona Borealis: A Diamond is Forever," 1957, advertising tear sheet featuring commissioned painting by Leona Wood. Courtesy of leonawood.com.

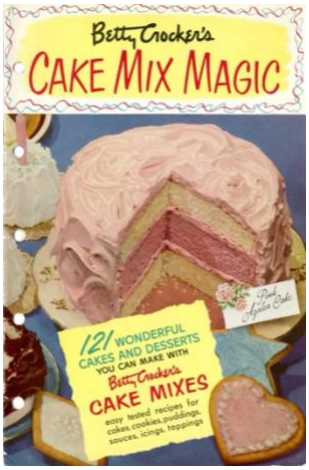

Fig. 6. General Mills, *Betty Crocker's Cake Mix Magic*, advertisements in recipe booklet, 1951. Courtesy of General Mills.

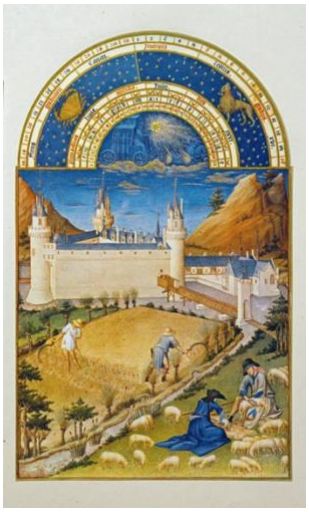

Fig. 7. Limbourg brothers, "July: Castle Poitiers, Sheep-shearing and Harvesting," illustration in the *Duc de Berry's Les Très Riches Heures*, c. 1412, Folio 7. Artstor.