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Who Is Still Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?

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Introduction

One of the most well known villains of all time is the Big Bad Wolf. Usually a male entity, he has been present in child and adult literature for centuries and continues to unsettle readers in the twenty-first century. The Big Bad Wolf is consistently portrayed in a negative light because he originated in a time when wolves were feared, making him the perfect example to terrify village children. Over time, as a result of social and cultural changes, writers have transformed the wolf so that he is no longer the terror that plagued the nineteenth century. Instead, the Big Bad Wolf has become either a domesticated house pet or an audience-friendly, romantic, even sexual entity. In the process, the Big Bad Wolf is not simply a figure in children's literature; he now attracts adult readers.

Children and adults alike have become disconnected from the original ideas of the Big Bad Wolf because the wolf as an animal no longer roams the countryside killing livestock and/or people. Fairytales, although still available in their original format, have been altered to feature wolves that are more tame and understanding. Whether the wolf is present in a Disney movie created for young viewers or a storybook that combines adaptations of the original tales, the character has been diluted and changed over the centuries.

Wolves are now being "declawed" so they are more relatable to both child and adult readers/viewers; however, their original purpose was to aid in scaring young children away from not only wolves that were more present in their everyday lives, but also the wolf-like qualities of human strangers. Changing the wolf severely alters its literary function. In the time the original tales were published, there were few, if any, variations; now there are multiple translations, not only with different levels of horror intensity but also with diverse cultural backgrounds. Various cultures view the wolf, the animal and the character, differently because the wolf is not a

predominant threat in several parts of the world but also because some places idolize the wolf as a hero.

A few case studies illustrate this literary transformation. Two of the most common Big Bad Wolf fairytales are “Little Red-Cap” (1812) and “The Three Little Pigs” (1890), but there is also a less known text, “The Wolf and the Seven Kids” (1812) which incorporates the same tactic of using a wolf as a villain. The texts all have the Big Bad Wolf as the central antagonist but they also have an innocent victim that the wolf tries to outsmart. The wolf is a harsh predator that is successful in tricking young girls and small animals, but he is eventually defeated. Even though the plot of these works is violent and terrifying, they serve a moral purpose as cautionary tales for young children on what could become a very real situation.

Each of these texts has been adapted into a new story or as a film version. Through the constant alterations and different perceptions of the Big Bad Wolf, he has been transformed from the original creature whose purpose is to teach children through fear to avoid danger, into two “declawed” versions: a romantic symbol in adult fiction and a domesticated dog in children’s fiction. Young adult media, such as the 2010 film adaptation of Red Riding Hood, features a heroine who has more intimate connections with the wolf character. Child- friendly animations of “The Three Little Pigs” and “The Wolf and the Seven Little Kids” reduce the originals to comedic skits that invoke joy in the viewer rather than fear. By analyzing these three film adaptations from the twenty-first century and incorporating scholarly research, I will illustrate the transformation of the wolf in a range of modern adaptations.

Literature Review

The Abilities and Limitations of the Wolf

Yong-qing Teng states that “Human beings … worship [wolves] for their heroic legends, or condemn them for their cruelty and greed” (Teng 1). Believing that humans are metaphorical thinkers by nature, Teng shows the wolf from Chinese and Western perceptions. The article is stylistically broken down into three components describing the worship of the wolf, the condemnation of the wolf, and the revival of the wolf’s image. These three components play a large role in how the wolf has adapted over time and why. According to Teng, the wolf began as a hero figure in many Western cultures. Whether in the form of a god or hero the wolf is described as one “who saved the people from crisis, nurtured them, or gave them the power they longed for” (2). The period in which the wolf enters condemnation would encompass the original tales and Teng references “Little Red-Cap” and how readers are pleased by the wolf being slain in the end. The final section draws on the scientific examination of the wolf and how a literal perception of the wolf has changed from predator to a creature torn between wilderness and domestication.

The path drawn by Teng’s conclusions analyze how the wolf, as character and animal, has been viewed for over centuries. The danger of the wolf led to its period of condemnation and ultimately created the villain of the Big Bad Wolf. If this shift had never happened the wolf would have been a continuous hero throughout texts, and the fairytales may have featured the wolf as a savior of the innocent rather than a terror.

Philosopher Thomas Nagel discusses the mentality of humans versus animals, specifically how the abilities of animals are sometimes overlooked as people assume them to be easily understood. He introduces the idea of reductionism, which states that things can be closely analyzed by breaking them down into smaller components. By looking at the mental capacity of the animal—in Nagel’s case the bat—a human can better understand how the animal works and

functions. Nagel breaks down the bat into its key components:, its sonar capabilities and ability to fly. Because humans do not share these crucial aspects of a bat's physical make-up and experience, we cannot imagine precisely what it is like to be a bat; we can only make guesses based on our own physical capabilities and experiences. Nagel believes that accurately conceiving the abilities of an animal of a different species is almost as incomprehensible as imagining the abilities of a Martian (Nagel 435-50).

Although Nagel does not deal with literature, his essay is greatly beneficial to the understanding of the animal psyche and how it is imperative to use imagination in any attempt (even if this ultimately ends in failure) to understand animals and how they think and act. When an author tries to gain sympathy from the reader, he or she often puts the animal character in a tough position that the reader thinks the animal cannot understand. E. B. White's Charlotte's Web (1952) creates sympathy first when Wilbur is to be slaughtered for being a runt, and then again when he is being raised to be made into food for human consumers. Human readers assume that Wilbur doesn't understand what is happening to him and thus we want to protect him. We imagine ourselves being that helpless and want to aid the character; our sympathy therefore reaches across traditional divisions of humans and other animal species.

The wolf may be harder to connect with because it is meant to be the predator. The "Wilbur" of "Little Red-Cap", is Red, making it easier for people to associate with. However, in "The Three Little Pigs,", people wish to protect the pigs as though they are they are human children. Nagel's research deals specifically with that bat but his idea of reductionism can be applied to the wolf for a better understanding through the wolf's breakdown. For example, the wolf is a pack animal that roams with the pack over a large amount of land. When a wolf is either separated or thrown out of the pack, it becomes more dangerous. A lone wolf has to obtain

food any way it can and because it is starving is more likely to wander into towns or villages to find food.

Many authors assume, in opposition to Nagel's advice , that wolves would naturally act like they do in stories about them because of the threat wolves posed during earlier historical periods. However, because the wolf is no longer as much of a physical threat to most audiences in the twenty-first century, writers and readers alike make new assumptions about the creature. For those that intend the wolf to be a romantic partner they have to assume how the animal would react in these situations. Would they be protective of their human lover? Would they provide dead animal carcasses to show their affection? The mental state of the wolf can be assumed but has to be dealt with as carefully as with the bat. That is, we have to admit our limitations in trying to imagine how a wolf would "feel" and writers always to some degree personify this nonhuman figure as they write his character into narrative situations.

In the same way that Nagel uses the bat as the subject for his article, Hans-Jorg Uther incorporates the fox in "The Fox in World Literature" (2006). Uther makes a strong argument in this article that the fox has aspects that are both good and bad and can be used in numerous ways throughout literature in various historical eras. The fox is a natural example of sly and cunning behavior that holds negative connotations; however, the fox is known for positive aspects, such as the way they care for their young. Literary examples of the fox dates back thousands of years and can be found in Greek mythology.

The fox is loved for its vibrant red coloring and in some stories that aspect is greatly expanded upon. In most instances the fox is used for its cunning behavior. If ever the fox is a "Wilbur" in a text, he uses his cleverness to escape from near- death experiences. Like the wolf, the fox has been used as a villain on multiple occasions. In the instance of Brer Rabbit, the fox is

outsmarted although he has set numerous traps for the rabbit. Some folklore allows the hero to transform himself into a fox and use the sly abilities to outsmart a monster and save the princess.

Uther shows that animals have numerous sides. Even though the fox is sometimes looked at as a villain it can also be considered a hero for those same aspects. Cases when a man becomes a fox are comparable to the werewolf, when a man is transformed into the wolf. In some literary examples, a single animal plays both the villain and the hero; for instance, the werewolf is like an animal version of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. The wolf has two sides, just as Uther describes the fox having. In Jack London's White Fang, the main character is a wolf that takes on the role of a domesticated house pet, although he remains in a wildlife setting. Weedon Scott wishes to tame White Fang, and their friendship creates a pack-like atmosphere (Uther 133-60).

Timea Szell makes a strong argument, regarding the use of animals in literature, but that goes against Nagel and Uther. Szell derives her essay from a Claude Levi Strauss' quote in which he states that animals are good to "think with." Throughout the essay she makes comparisons in a wide range of texts on why exactly animals are used in an educational way. Her arguments disagree with Nagel and Uther, because she focuses on the limitations that can come from using animals in works by incorporating their natural qualities. She does discuss, however, the innovative way that authors of all periods have gone against those limitations to benefit their writings. In traditional or medieval pieces of work, animals are used more realistically. Wolves and other beasts are used as dangers and as symbols to mark danger, whereas in more modern times, the limitations, as Szell has deemed them, are exaggerated and allow animals to be used in hundreds of ways.

For instance, one of the oldest stories is that of Adam and Eve and the snake that causes them to lose paradise. Snakes are dangerous creatures that, although small, can carry harsh

venom and could kill many larger creatures. Szell includes examples not only from the beginning pages of Genesis but also from the story of Noah and the Ark, or the Great Flood. She mentions that a secular child who first learned of Noah's Ark did not focus on the saving of the few creatures that made the safe voyage but rather of the destruction that must have overcome other animals. Then she moves along to even reference a colleague who stated that Chaucer used animal allusions to signify human qualities and actions (Szell 147-57).

Many fairytales, not only limited to the well-known Brothers Grimm versions, do not have animals turning into humans, or vice versa. The presence of the "were-" creature has changed many perceptions on whether the human is personified by the animal, or whether the animal is personified by the human. In the film adaptations of The Wolf and the Seven Kids and L'il Bad Wolf, even though the wolf character is walking around like a human and wearing clothes, there is still a separation given that the character is a wolf. However, in Red Riding Hood, many human characters become a wolf creature and prey on others in the film. What Szell deems as a limitation, seems to be what makes animal characters function properly throughout any piece.

How Children Relate to Animals

James Serpell focuses on children's perceptions of animals and how people are affected by animal images from an early age. Serpell notes that from a very young age kids are introduced to animals. In the kid's department at any shopping center, animals are featured on a large majority of the products. Serpell lists a variety of examples from TV shows to real-life cases, such as zoos and aquariums, which, allow children access to animals they might not find in their natural environment. When boys go through a "brutality phase" when they are younger, animals are used as the boys' primarily outlets. Another point is that being exposed to animal abuse at a

young age can cause possible desensitization to abuse in children's interactions with other people in their future relationships. Also, Serpell notes that animals are used as "ice breakers," or as a tool of recognition for children that they can relate with. Interactions between children and animals thus can have both good and bad effects (Serpell 87).

Serpell offers a double-sided look into the effects of animals in children's lives in both literature and in lived experience. Some believe that children relate better to animals than to people, and these findings could be incorporated into children's interactions with fictional animals in literature. It is possible to assume that if a child were to see another child and animal interacting in a story, then, he or she would mimic that child in his or her own life. Also, if a child reads about an animal hurting another child, as in some fairy tales, he or she may be more cautious of his or her own particular interactions with the same animals in real life.

The wolf was used as the original villain because it was a real threat to children. The Big Bad Wolf that comes after Red is portrayed as a standard wolf without exaggerated features. In hopes to protect their children, parents would share these tales so that their children would understand the messages through the plot and not wander out alone without help and supervision. Also, the wolf represents a stranger; particularly a male stranger that might prey on a young girl.

Stepping away from just a younger audience, Pauline Davey Zeece looks at the use of animals in general, particularly at how humans perceive animals, in her article "Animal Antics in Children's Literature" (1998). Zeece uses a handful of books as primary sources to analyze the animals used in the texts and how those animals and story lines appeal to children. Her research includes J. Beaty's Picture Book Storytelling: Learning Activities for Young Children and C. Tomlinson's Essential of Children's Literature. The article goes through each primary source and dissects its use of words, pictures, and plot points to explain how the books become teaching

tools and interactive for children of various ages. Zeece quotes Tomlinson that children ages four to six try to take the images that are shown to them in their books and uncover information. This article helps to show that children, starting at a young age, familiarize with animals to engage in different texts.

Like the example of the young girl who imitates a horse, children will try to incorporate actions that they see their beloved animals doing. When writers use humans in their works, it is instantly easy for the reader to connect with what is happening. The reader can immediately understand the ache of a bad break-up or the pain of a broken bone, but when writers begin to personify the actions of animals the instant connection is challenged. Zeece mentions the interest that people, mainly pet owners, have in the possibility of their pets having lives that happen when they are left at home alone. These theories have allowed the human imagination to comprehend that animals are not just lying around on couches, but throwing parties or fighting crime while there are no eyes on them (Zeece 35-38).

If children are as easily influenced by animal characters as Zeece suggests, then the transformation of the wolf in children‘s literature in recent years makes much sense. The wolf is such an engaging creature and because it physically resembles a dog children can be lost in its image and mistake its true nature. In L’il Bad Wolf, the young wolf is a child himself and becomes a character that children can easily relate to. Most children know what it is like to interact with at least one parent, and the Big Bad Wolf’s familial relationship makes him a more sympathetic character. Having a son gives the pap wolf more depth and makes him a more rounded. Uther believes that the fox’s parenting abilities allowed for it to be viewed in a more positive light. Similarly, the Big Bad Wolf’s image is softened by having a son.

In an interesting twist, Corr has taken a real-life experience and drawn it out to apply it effectively to examples from literature. Corr first establishes the relationship between a child and his or her pet. By referencing familiar childhood stories, previous experiences instantly connect the real occurrences with the fictional. The first section shows that children are able to accept the death of a pet; the next section explains how the child deals with the grieving. Corr is able to bring in not only fictional texts but also realistic workbooks that allow a child to cope with the experience through what they see another child handling.

Corr explains the different means of death such as natural, euthanasia, and accidental. The article moves on to discuss the ways that society handles death, sometimes by bringing a new pet into the family. When a pet dies, a child is faced with not only losing a love one but also coming face to face with their own mortality. Children can relate to pets and animals because when they are little they are on the same level, some children only have pets to connect with in place of siblings. In Corr's prime example, I'll Always Love You, the dog in the text dies and the child is left to deal with the passing of the family pet. There are also some untraditional texts used such as The Yearling, which looks at the relationship between a young boy and a deer (Corr 399-414).

Death is a sensitive subject for many children because it is hard for them to comprehend the true loss of something or someone that has passed away. All three of the original texts end in the death of the wolf. The Big Bad Wolf is slain by the huntsman, eaten by pigs, and drowns because of stones in his stomach. Parents feel that the death of the wolf is justified because of the heinous actions he tried to commit, but it is still hard for any child to comprehend the final outcome of the villain.

Wolf and Animals in Adult Literature

Christopher White focuses solely on William Faulkner's animal-laden novel in his article "The Modern Magnetic Animal: As I Lay Dying and the Uncanny Zoology of Modernism" (2008), illustrating the use of animals metaphorically and physically throughout the text. Instead of focusing on animals as symbols, Faulkner incorporates animals in the text as props. White discusses how the representation of animals and their blending with human characters is consistently present. He references psychoanalytic theories as prescribed by Sigmund Freud and how language incorporates animals into text. He makes the point that As I Lay Dying, incorporates animals to make order out of chaos because of their familiarity to readers and characters. Faulkner has many animals represented in his text, but they are limited to farm animals, such as cows and horses, and White focuses a large amount on the horse. The article plays with animals communicating through their own biological sounds, but he also reiterates how animals are used as metaphors and how Faulkner uses animals for symbolism as well. (White 81-101).

Cary Wolfe, appropriately named, expands on some of the ideas that White applies to As I Lay Dying. In Wolfe's article, "Human, All Too Human: Animal Studies and the Humanities" (2009), Wolfe analyzes the use of animals in more adult- oriented literature. Wolfe's article begins by discussing animals in life in general and then more specifically in the humanities. He makes the point that animals are present in almost everything, from art to literary metaphors, and to separate animals from these works would be almost impossible. He believes there is a difficulty to incorporating animals and that for writers it may almost be considered an art-form. However, he also wants to take the animal beyond merely examples of a theme or a metaphor. He believes they should be seen as a subject in a work rather than just a small piece.

Further, Wolfe exemplifies how animals come in a variety of forms and how humans are animals as well, just in the largest number. Like Nagel, Wolfe analyzes animals based on functionality giving them more life in a piece. An interesting point is that animals are not just tools to be used for metaphors and figurative purposes, but also as characters and subjects. As I Lay Dying is a valuable example of because it has characters that use animals as metaphors, but it also has animals that are physically present throughout the piece. This is an important balance between figurative and literal animals that makes them seem like human characters (Wolfe 564-75).

The blurring of lines between human characters and animals characters is seen predominantly in “The Three Little Pigs” and “The Wolf and the Seven Kids.” The pigs and the young goat children could be replaced by human characters and function just as naturally, with the wolf still being the predator. In a more recent TV production known as Grimm, the anamorphic characters are able to hold human guises as long as their emotions do not get the best of them. Although these characters are animal-like beings, there are still animals present in the show just like in the case of As I Lay Dying. Grimm has incorporated many of the Grimm Brother’s works including “Little Red Cap,” and the wolf character is known as a Blutbad, or “blood bath,” and is meant to represent the Big Bad Wolf.

Wolf as Hero and Villain

Donna Varga considers two predators used frequently in literature: the wolf and the bear, specifically in the two stories “Little Red Riding Cap” and Johnny Bear. In the first story Red Riding Hood meets a wolf on her journey through a dark forest on her way to her grandmother’s house. Critics believe that the wolf not only has an evil nature but is also drawn to a sexually innocent girl. This captures the wolf as being an example of a true predator. Critics also believe

that this justifies the final mutilation and death of the wolf and shows children that they should not trust strangers.

The second work studied has the predator in a completely different light and makes him more of a “Wilbur” in the text. Johnny is a young bear cub taken in by a girl named Norah. The relationship between the two is like a mother with her child and Johnny eventually becomes more human than animal. Varga states that what captures the innocence of Johnny is that he passes away from a fatal condition in the works and thus never has time to mature into his possible violent adulthood. This article is an excellent secondary source because it analyzes two important pieces of children’s literature. Both wolves and bears can be carnivorous animals but neither is horribly violent. The wolf that encounters Red Riding Hood is not necessarily a representation of the real life animal but more a large predator prowling a small girl.

Varga argues that it was more appropriate to have a wolf represent the stranger in the woods rather than a grown man in this time and thus gave the creature a negative connotation. A wolf was an almost comedic example when he dressed in the grandmother’s clothing and gets into bed and in many different illustrations this has been entertaining for children. However, if a grown man who was prowling were to dress in women’s clothing, it would be disturbing, although it would hold the same meaning. In Johnny Bear, however, Johnny is a sweet, innocent character who in comparison makes humans seem evil. He becomes a young girl’s pet and best friend and awakens the maternal nature in her. This relationship is very important in a young girl’s life and the author is allowed to make the story more fantastical by using a bear cub. Normally, a dog would be in a child’s life but the story is enhanced by a young animal that is considered a predator when it is full grown. The author of this piece realizes that this could

change the meaning of the story and thus Johnny is immortalized with his innocence allowing children to not see the possibilities (Varga 187-205).

As Varga pointed out the roles of how humans should approach predatory animals are reversed in Johnny Bear, but Nikolajeva discusses how animal roles can be reversed when a anamorphic character and another animal are in a text. In her article “Devils, Demons, Familiars, Friends: Toward a Semiotics of Literary Cats” (2009), Nikolajeva states that she will define feline characteristics by pulling from familiar and unfamiliar cat figures. She notes that cats have been neglected throughout history as just being house pets, but now they are considered more complex. The Egyptians have used the animal as an idol and it has been representative of their deities. She looks at stories and notes that, although cats at first appearance play a minor role, the cats’ overall importance to the piece is larger than first assumed. Cats can have a large array of roles including heroes and mythical counterparts. She concludes that cats are used just as frequently in texts as other animals (Nikolajeva 248-67).

The example given is that of the Cheshire cat and Dinah the cat from Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll. This is interesting because it shows that an author can use an animal in numerous ways. The Cheshire cat plays more of a humanistic character where as the kitten Dinah is more used as a common pet. This is a strange relationship between an anamorphic character and an animal character. In the case of Goofy, who is an anamorphic dog character, and Pluto who is just a dog, it is hard to view Goofy as a dog when Pluto is there in comparison.

“Little Red Cap” makes it easy to distinguish between animal and human character because Red is a human female. However, in the case of the three little pigs and the seven goat children, they are all animals being naturally preyed on by the wolf. This confusion can really

mislead an audience, especially in the incident of the pigs eating the wolf in the original tale. If a wolf is the villain, then any animal character opposing the wolf would be seen as the protagonist. However, with the pigs eating the wolf it reverses this and the pigs might be considered the villain. With adaptations of the work this ending is removed and the wolf normally burns his tail in the pigs' fireplace and then runs away in pain.

Lori Oswald's article, "Heroes and Victims: The Stereotyping of Animal Characters in Children's Realistic Animal Fiction" (1995), focuses on a more "Americanized" text and this shows the effects that Western Culture has had on the original European tales. One of the most influential and heroic examples in children's literature is Old Yeller. Oswald uses Yeller as a strong example of a dog that is a savior to a family that glorifies his death by making him a martyr. Dogs are good examples as heroes because they are biologically loyal and determined, and they are easily translatable into characters that young readers can love and connect with. Oswald looks at a few different ways that animals can be heroes but two of the most important are animals that are heroes to other animals and then animals that are heroes to human protagonists. She also compares how animals differ in their heroic stature based on their qualities. Oswald uses the examples of horses and how they are heroes because they serve humans. These theories sometimes contradict each other because in some texts dogs can be both heroes and villains, as in Call of the Wild by Jack London (Oswald 135-49).

Jack London has written numerous texts that have a dog or wolf that is a protagonist for human characters. The wolf looks like it could be a breed of dog allowing children to make the misconception. However, as more and more authors feature wolves or wolf-dog hybrids as the protagonist in their pieces, children are going to forget the wrong doings of the Big Bad Wolf's past and only focus on how beneficial the wolf can be now. L'il Bad Wolf illustrates this, too.

Not only is the young wolf a friend to the pigs but he is also easy to relate to by other children. He acts as the protagonist trying to protect the pigs. The father represents the old and the son represents the new. If the Big Bad Wolf is the ultimate villain, then his son is the representation of how the wolf has been adapted over the years. The Big Bad Wolf spends the entire film hoping that he can help his son take on his legacy but unfortunately his son wants no part in it and although he pretends to care he is only trying to humor his dad.

Wolf's Negative Effects

To understand the use of animals in literature, one should look at children's and adult's literature but also literature of different cultures. Pavol Prokop, Muhammet Usak, and Mehmet Erdogan used a wide range of sources in their article "Good Predators in Bad Stories: Cross-cultural Comparison of Children's Attitudes towards Wolves" (2011). They collected data to help show the amount of children varying in geographical location—accounting for some cultures' different views on animals. Predators play a large part in maintaining ecosystems and, although they are sometimes destructive, they help to keep a balance to avoid overpopulation. For instance, the grey wolf is very controversial in Europe, an area of the world that has a higher population. There are numerous studies to determine kids' attitudes towards animals, but not enough done towards predators specifically. Children in Europe are raised to believe that wolves are dangerous and heartless and will kill their own young or starve their young.

Based on the studies there is more of a trend in women developing a fear of threatening animals. The use of the wolf as a negative persona has helped in some instances, but wolves are also prey for human hunters, and this outlook on the animal does not help young children to believe that they are harmless. The article incorporates a survey that questions the awareness that children have of predators. This article is beneficial because not only does in look at the

literature but also at the society around the literature and it gives some background. Animals are only beneficial in texts based on how the audiences view them. The nastier an animal is in a text, the more fearful children will be of that animal in real life. On the reverse side, though, if a text makes an animal look safe and harmless, then children are going to gravitate towards it. It is very possible that if children were raised to believe that playing with spiders was the right thing to do, it would be much more common (Prokop 229-42).

Charlotte's Web

could be confusing for children because Charlotte, a normally harmful spider, is shown as a protagonist and eventually the reader is saddened by her death. Some children's storybooks retell "Little Red Cap" and "The Three Little Pigs" from the viewpoint of the wolf. By doing this the author has allowed the child into the mindset of the wolf and even though he is essentially the bad the reader is given a biased prospective making the wolf seem pitiful.

If children believe the wolf to be a victim then the entire message of the text can be altered. Vice versa, if an adult believes the wolf to be powerful and sexual then humans may want to acquire these abilities. A. A. Younis sets the focus on a somewhat negative aspect of animals and that is the mental state of a human morphing into that of an animal in the article "Lycanthropy Alive in Babylon: The Existence Of Archetype" (2009). Younis opens by defining the term "lycanthropy," which means, a metamorphosis into a wolf-like animal. The authors cite Carl Jung on the subject of lycanthropy and how two young girls dreamt of their mother becoming an animal. In later life, her mental state seemed to deteriorate and Jung believes this was the mother's way of decomposing into a primitive state. The mother was reverting back to her primitive instincts which are more animalistic then her normal thought processes. There are findings of delusional people who believe that they are suffering from lycanthropy and this stems

from the involvement lycanthropy has in folklore and literature, especially in modern times where werewolves are sexualized. The term “lycanthropy” defines a physical mutation; however, many documented cases result from a mental condition where the affected think they are suffering from lycanthropy when in fact they are only suffering from what they think is lycanthropy (Younis 161-164).

This article looks at an actual mental disorder among living human beings. It puts literature to the side for a moment to develop the ideas of how humans have delusions to allow them to think that they can be going through a physical transformation when they are simply having a mental breakdown. This can show some of the harsher effects that the presence of animals in literature and myth can have because people not only want to embody the animal but actually believe that they are becoming the animal. Many animals, especially in modern literature, are more humanized even as far as wearing clothing and walking on two legs. This tends to blur the line between the true realities of animals and if incorrectly worked into the psyche, human individuals can envelop attributes of the animal themselves.

Characters like the Big Bad Wolf could affect people who are suffering through mental lycanthropy because the wolf is appealing to these individuals. In the film version of Red Riding Hood the wolf can communicate with the human main character because he is her father. The father believes that his daughter would make the perfect wolf because of her lineage. Some people may see the lycanthropy as a blessing rather than a curse because of films that suggest that being a werewolf is not only attractive but empowering through the wolf-like abilities that they gain.

David Hunt puts emphasis on the use of the wolf in texts as well as its historical back ground in his article “The Face of the Wolf is blessed, or is it? Diverging Perceptions of the

Wolf" (2008). Hunt opens by stating that all societies have different perceptions of an animal, and this includes the wolf. He would rather focus on the more positive attitudes towards the wolf rather than the negative ones that flow from many Christian cultures. He cites the Oxford dictionary as having many definitions for the term "wolf" which are mostly negative. Hunt lists the different types of literature such as when the wolf is a "beast of prey," but he focuses more on when men act like wolves. He includes interesting examples of when men have been rumored to be raised by a she-wolf, such as the founders of Rome and Chingis Khan. Hunt explores the relationship between shepherds and wolves, and how they are intense enemies, yet shepherds still respect the wolves for their masterful ability to hunt in an artistic fashion. People also believed that they could gain something from wearing the wolf skin coat, such as magical abilities in hunting.

Hunt's discussion of how humans want to incorporate some of the abilities of the wolf in them which allows for a better understanding of why authors would include animals in their texts. People crave certain qualities that only animals have and to obtain these qualities would further the human individual (Hunt 319-34). Like Younis discusses, lycanthropy is one of the ways humans try to obtain wolf qualities. When Uther discussed the fox, there were instances where men became foxes to inhabit their cunning behavior. A wolf is a powerful animal that is a skilled hunter and has a strong familial unit. If a human possessed these two key factors then their lives could potentially be much different.

Red Riding Hood Articles

Gigi Thibodeau and Todd Avery's article "Lytton Strachey's 'The Decline and Fall of Little Red Riding'" acts as not only an analysis of the original text but also as a retelling of the Red Riding Hood story as well. The article begins with a more analytical stance including a brief

biography of Strachey but also some background information on how he came about writing his version of Little Red Riding Hood. The critics focus on the differences between Grimm's fairytale and how there are less religious allusions, exclusively Christian, in this version. Many of Strachey's overall influences come from Edward Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" and suggest that his retelling of the fairytale may be more of a parody than anything (Thibodeau and Avery 8).

This article focuses directly on Red Riding Hood, and the traditional aspects versus more modern aspects that have caused it to be altered from the original text. The story written by Strachey is a strong reflection of the Grimm's telling but also shows how watered down it can be made when certain aspects, such as the ferocity of the wolf, are removed. As a parody of the original piece, Strachey's is meant to be more humorous rather than frightening, which demonstrates how vastly the interpretation of the piece can be changed when some of the more dramatic elements are removed, like in the case of the child- friendly adaptations.

To break up the tension caused by fear in the original pieces, authors will have their villains provide comic relief to the audience because it is easier for the reader to involve himself or herself if the material is not too overwhelming. Scenes where the wolf is trying to capture and/or kill the pigs by rocket missile and fails, draws the attention away from the actual act taking place. This idea of distraction is evident in Strachey's writing because he does not dwell on the horrific things.

Afshan Jafar's article "Little Red Riding Hood in College" is an excellent look at how the message that is represented in the original tale by the Grimm Brothers is used to define the sexual taboo of a student- professor relationship in modern society. Jafar defines the two stereotypes being a "female student as Little Red Riding Hood" and "the image of the male

professor as an incestuous Big Bad Wolf" This relationship is seen throughout the world;, however, the article does not discuss the consensual relationships between a student and a professor, but just magnifies the negative connotations of this relationship. Parents and peers alike are disgusted by the advancements of older men on to unsuspecting younger women (Jafar 7).

This piece identifies perfectly with what Perrault and Grimm tried to convey in their telling of "Little Red Cap." The wolf is a sexualized predator who is taking advantage of an innocent child. Jafar is simply inserting a human young woman and a human male professional respectively for Red and the wolf. Children are supposed to understand not to trust strangers from this story's interaction. This message can be misconstrued as the wolf becomes a welcomed sexual figure. In situations like the Twilight franchise, the wolves are not only meant to be lovers but also defined as being the perfect soul mates by "imprinting" on their lover.

This leads female readers and audiences to think that the beast can be controlled that the love between the two of them could save the wolf figure and it would end in the perfect relationship. Little by little, the wolf being used like this removes the animal instincts that the wolf has and replaces them with human mental processes. Eventually the wolf will only be a vessel that the human mind cohabitates. If the wolf is looked at through this sexual lens, then the student- professor relationship would be one of romance and passion, leaving Jafar's argument deflated.

The Three Little Pigs

Article

Susan McHugh begins by restating that when animals are used in literature it is primarily as symbolism. These animals were also put as lower class to human characters, making them

seem submissive. Modernism led to a shift in this idea by placing animals into their own category, and, as a consequence, these animals and their tendencies became a formidable character. Animals in stories such as these not only symbolize themselves, but also contrast human nature and bring out the "inner animal" in human characters. The piece references Herman Melville's Moby Dick and how in that period whaling was an acceptable means of gathering meat. However, in the twentieth-first century, whaling has become illegal in many nations and this book may not be considered a classic should it have been written today. This book as well as others in that time has a human protagonist versus an animal protagonist. The shift has occurred in which animals are more supportive agents in modern writing, causing more character sympathy (McHugh 363-67).

McHugh thereby defends the use of animals in literary works, reflecting a transition from animals as antagonists to animals as supporting characters or even central protagonists. The Three Little Pigs is an interesting example of McHugh's argument, drawn from traditional fantasy. Although the wolf was crafty and meant to be evil, the pigs were used as protagonists. They used wit to outsmart the wolf. However, the wolf was more of a predator following his natural behavior and the pigs were more "humanized" by living in built homes. Many adult-oriented texts will feature animals that are more villainous. If animals were still used this way in all forms of writing, then children's literature would be more horrific and villainous than it is now. However, children are more attached and trusting of animals and this relationship has caused a flourish in animals' presence in works of literature.

Conclusions

How has he stayed the same?

In the Harry Potter book series, there are two different werewolf characters. As opposed to many contemporary media depictions that show how the werewolf can control itself in wolf form the Potter series stresses the werewolf's lack of restraint. Remus Lupin is the tamest of the werewolf characters. He fears the animal that is inside of him and chooses to restrain this savage aspect with a potion. The loss of control when he becomes the wolf is what he fears most, especially with the possibility that he might hurt someone. As a human, he has no features that would suggest that he is a werewolf. Slight hints are given to the reader of his true identity but none of the characters around him know of his terrible secret.

The opposing example to Lupin is Greyback, the wolf that cursed Lupin and works for the main antagonist of the series. Whether he is in control of the animal side or not, Greyback is a Big Bad Wolf to the core. He uses his strength and built up rage to prey on other characters just as the actual wolf would. A perfect summary, stated by Remus Lupin himself, is that "Fenrir Greyback is, perhaps, the most savage werewolf alive today. He regards it as his mission in life to bite and to contaminate as many people as possible; he wants to create enough werewolves to overcome the wizards. Voldemort has promised him prey in return for his services. Greyback specialises in children... Bite them young, he says, and raise them away from their parents, raise them to hate normal wizards" (Rowling 1-652). Even though he believes the children to be best to turn because they can be raised young, it is no coincidence that he preys on innocent victims very much like the Big Bad Wolf that attacked Red Riding Hood. This description is not only accurate in terms of his actions but also in his physical appearance. Unlike Lupin, Greyback appears in the movie franchise to have a large amount of facial hair, eyes comparable to those of an animal's, and oddly angled ears similar to a dog's.

The Harry Potter universe only allows for its werewolves to be able to transition during a full moon. In Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban (2004), Lupin is unable to take his magical serum and is forced to change in front of the main heroes of the piece. When approached, he lashes out and it becomes apparent that he has no control of his actions when he is in this wolf form. Greyback has not overcome the full moon but expanded upon it. Albus Dumbledore, a protagonist in the film, comments that Greyback has begun hunting and consuming human flesh outside the influence of the moon. His teeth are shown as sharp and covered in plaque, in the same way that wolf's or even a dog's would gather plaque if they were unable to support basic hygiene. Lupin realizes the wolf is a danger but tries to suppress that side of him. Although Lupin does not survive the book series, he as a werewolf figure emerges a hero in contrast to Fenrir Greyback and the loss of control.

How has he changed?

The perception of the wolf has greatly changed over time. The wolf is no longer the villain in so many texts because the creature is less present in everyday life. Red Riding Hood has sexualized the wolf in a romantic manner. Although he has taken on the term "werewolf," the wolf is still an animal but with this new hybrid form has been given greater erotic appeal. In the original tale, the wolf was fearsome because he represented a male figure that was a danger. Even though he remains threatening, viewers find pleasure in a man with a literal animal side. The film adaptation is not the only grand deviation from the original tale.

What once made the wolf perilous for adults and children has now made it sexually appealing and empowering for both males and females. In the more recent television show "Once Upon A Time" the Big Bad Wolf is actually the Red Riding Hood character in the show. This completely alters the original interpretation because instead of Red being an innocent victim

or even a potential lover, she is actually the villain herself. Not only does this assign animalistic tendencies to Red but also male qualities as well.

Is anyone still afraid?

Although, the wolf has been featured as a hero in a plethora of media adaptations, the wolf is still a villain in some cases. In a Cherokee parable, a grandfather explains to his grandson that there are two wolves inside of each of us. One that represents negative feelings such as hate and sorrow and another one that represents positive qualities like joy and strength. The boy asks his grandfather which wolf will eventually win and the grandfather replies that it is whichever wolf we feed. Clearly, mass media and popular culture have been feeding the good wolf as of late.

The wolf has transformed into two different beings in the modern era. The first is that of a domestic animal that children have come to love. No longer do children fear the creature but see it very much like a dog. Pop culture has constantly been using wolves and dogs alike to be heroes in numerous books and movies. Such representations can leads to the misinterpretation that they are almost the same thing. However, wolves have a much stronger predatory nature than most dogs, and the wolf is born and bred with its own kind in the wild where it must depend on instinct to survive. Dogs for centuries have been raised in the human home, making them more closely connected to human environments than to the animal realm. They do not have a predatory nature because their food is freely given to them and the most they need nature for is to use the bathroom.

The original tales may have been dated, but their themes were made concrete by the fear that young children would have towards wolves and other wild animals. The perception of the wolf has changed so that these stories have become solely for amusement rather than cautionary

tales to deter children from possible danger. Too many Red Riding Hood adaptations treat the wolf as comic relief or even as a romantic interest for our main character. Twilight (2008) has become one of the largest perpetrators of the sensuous wolf. “Team Jacob” shirts, head gear, and buttons highlight the physical and emotional aspects of not only Jacob Black as a character but also as the animal. Series like these have highlighted a war between wolf and vampires, making it seem that the wolf is humanity’s ultimate hero. In Twilight specifically, the wolf creatures are able to overpower vampires and appear, shirtless primarily, throughout the film to defend humans. Other television series make the werewolf bite fatal to vampires and have created it to be an alternative to the stake. The duel between the two species portrays the vampires as the villains and thus the wolf falls into the slot of the hero, sometimes but rarely the anti-hero. A werewolf sometimes has no control over their actions and acts as the anti-hero in cases of being a lesser evil. By protecting human characters from vampires or possible other supernatural, even instinctually, the werewolf can gain some heroic qualities though he may not be a true hero by definition.

The idea of the “she-wolf” is present in many songs and film adaptations that can connect a maternal aspect to the animal children traditionally used to fear. This can lead to a strange reading when the wolf wears the grandmother’s clothing and instead of being cautious, the children will laugh. This maternal misconception could also change “The Wolf and the Seven Kids” because there will be less trickery on the wolf’s part if he is mistaken to truly be the mother by not just the kids but also the reader. The legend of Romulus and Remus portrays the ultimate she-wolf. Not only is she a strong maternal figure to two lost boys but she has taken them in as her own despite the fact that they are human. Rudyard Kipling alludes to a maternal wolf in his text The Jungle Book (1894). Mowgli, a lost human child, is raised by wolves and

grows up believing wolves to be his brothers. In Disney adaptations of this story, the she-wolf of the pack is seen looking lovingly at the abandoned baby in the basket and even encourages her mate to accept him into their "pack." The clip also features three young wolf pups standing to the side wagging their tails in what can only be described as in a cute fashion.

Mowgli is raised to believe that these wolves are his family and before encountering other humans that is the only family he has ever known. Children would find comfort in the maternalistic she wolf and associate her with their own mothers. The protectiveness that the she-wolf and the werewolf offer to humans would lead children to believe that the wolf is a nurturer and that there is no danger to fear from them. Teng recognizes this as part of the shift that she discusses in her article. If one believes that wolves are being used for their instinctual actions, the wolf as a mother and/or a protector is justifiable.

Clearly, there are infinite examples of the wolf throughout texts and film, proving not only that he is a prominent fictional character but a transmutable one as well. At the start of this thesis it seemed that the transition of the wolf from the villain to the hero demeaned the importance of his power and symbolism. However, through research and observation, one discovers that his power and symbolism have proven themselves fixed entities. By the wolf becoming the hero he has strengthened his use in children and adult media. The characterizing of his or her physical strength, nurturing, and intelligence allows the wolf to be continuously evolving. Regardless of the connotations associated with wolf, his mere existence and universality establish his immortality among literary characters. The question no longer seems to be who is afraid of the Big Bad Wolf but rather what reasons are there to fear him when he has proven himself to be such a hero.

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