

Chapter VI

Conclusion

The present study of the select feminist fairy tales maps the intersection of gender and social reality. It depicts how the carnival of gender in literature transcends the frontiers of gender and gender differences in the select texts. The trials and tribulations of the marginalised genders in the canonical fairy tale texts as commodities or objects of decor questions gender violence, gendered aggression and gender disparity. The objectification of women is reversed in the feminist inversions of fairy tales. The fact that women are heroic and daring, but dubbed elegant and beautiful as a concern towards blurring the boundaries of gender is addressed. The extraordinary strength of the marginalised are celebrated and gender boundaries blurred to break the stereotypes of culture in feminist fairy tales. This facilitates to emancipate each and every gendered identity from socio-patriarchal structures to discourse on the trauma of subjugation experienced by all marginalised genders. The revolutionary feminist fairy tale texts and films subtly address nutrition, health, social and gendered outcomes on the one hand; and anxieties of incest, violence, rape and pornography on the other. The subverted texts attempt to narrow gender gaps and chart gendered outcomes to develop self-tools to build consensus across identity groups.

The Moon Ribbon and Other Tales, The Bloody Chamber, Kissing the Witch, Her Stories, Sweeping Beauties and Feminist Fables address concerns like fearlessness and self-esteem and illustrate how women battle a number of issues including the stress of catamenia, postpartum depression and psychosis. The victimised female protagonists escape from the clutches of domination as they accost similar gender concerns as apparent in lullabies, cradle songs, verses, games, riddles, comics, picture books, poems and juvenile literature. The feminist fairy tale texts express that cooking and cleaning are

depicted as not gender roles, but skills that are capable of being executed by any gender.

The female predicament of the marginalised genders and the concerns of docile domesticated women question the need to address gender inequities.

The invisibility of women and their struggle to achieve selfhood is obvious in the excruciating pain that women undergo in the new spatio-temporal contours while dealing with love, marital relationships, values and customs which hinder the emancipation of women. Rootlessness and search for identity in the select feminist fairy tale texts explain that there are a plurality of ways in which scholars can engage in unsettling dominant economies of knowledge by doing and undoing gender. Expressions of 'beyond gender,' 'feminine mystique,' 'new woman,' 'gender pluralism,' 'altruism,' 'self-realisation' and the need to include these texts in the pedagogy articulate a shared vision to create a humane egalitarian society. Gender relations are enhanced through self-actualisation, not as men, women and third gender, but as human beings of substance. It is essential for scholars of fairy tale and feminist fairy tale scholarship to understand that gender is a choice and that life would be in peril if one does not realise that all genders exist in an all-inclusive world where post genderism and technology have transported gendered identities to a genderless world.

The need to comprehend the concepts of beyond gender, blurring of gender roles, erosion of gender boundaries in classrooms and the need to re-read texts in this genre underline the requirement to impart non-sexist education and find meaningful solutions that are socially relevant. Introduction of feminist fairy tales in the syllabi, reaching out to the less privileged on a local and global level and the formulation of policies to update the curricula in schools and colleges calls for the inclusion of gender theories, gender concepts and methodologies of varied disciplines to make learning of literature gender sensitive and gender empathetic.

The feminist fairy tales interrogated patriarchy, the subordination of women's rights and the subjection of women to social norms, cultural codes, and social expectations. The feminist texts and reworkings, conscientised boys and girls about the multi-dimensional roles played by women and investigate causes of gender disparity by questioning patriarchal gender debates. The texts of Yolen, Namjoshi, Carter, Donoghue, Hamilton and the Feminist Fairy tale Collective critique socialist, liberalist and conservative thoughts from gender perspectives and challenge the sociological gender biases to voice the need for a harmonious benevolent classless civilisation and culture where gender equality, gender justice and gender balance pervade.

The blurring of gender roles and gender boundaries to break the stereotypes of culture in the select texts contest traditional gender roles to echo newer gender dimensions in literary and unschooled circles and in the non-academic spaces and the academia. Thus, feminist fairy tales, (whether by a philomath or a misologist) could be discussed to contribute newer thoughts and philosophies to create gendered spaces to articulate a shared vision. The tales uphold gender-based values, gendered messages, gender sensitivity, gender harmony, gender justice and redefine the goals of gender development.

The texts selected for the study are invested with strong women heroines who break the glass ceiling by adhering to socio-cultural norms to overcome socio-psychological, socio-cultural and socio-economic barriers. The texts are an impetus to champion parity of sexes and resonate experiences of isolation, alienation, self-fragmentation, problems of displacement, discrimination, hybrid identity and issues of cross-cultural perception. This is to be done, not on a gendered level but on a humane plane. The variants of these texts in the film versions picture the emancipated woman and

echo the theme of familial and social responsibility in grooming gender sensitive individuals.

The blurring of gender revels in the camaraderie of all genders. Feminist fairy tale authors empower all genders to break the fetters and overcome gender discrimination to emancipate themselves in a world where gender, class, equality and power are at loggerheads. The feminist fairy tales invite all genders to break gendered social taboos to weave a tapestry of gender positive initiatives to improve mindfulness on the theme of gender. Feminist fairy tales challenge the myth of the eternal feminine and elevate empowered women to transform and transcend the self beyond all gendered ideologies. Akin to Naomi Woolf in her *Fire and Ice*, the feminist fairy tale authors champion power feminism.

The feminist fairy tale writers harp on the theme of ‘Can the subaltern speak’ and discourse on the marginalisation of all genders. Educationists interrogate subjugation through comprehending dualism, gender politics and gender power. The theme of transformation, the topic of the Anthropocene in the post human world and the themes of posthumanism subtly address the need to blur gender boundaries. Posthuman digital narratives raise questions like, “Is the post human, post woman?” Themes about the cyborg, artificial intelligence, and futures of gender in the post-modern digital narratives can be worked out. The post human imagination and the question of gender, desire and embodiment in posthumanism are concepts that enable one to aspire of a world beyond gender.

Postgenderism incorporated technology to wipe out the biological, sociological and psychological role of gender where bodies will no longer be circumscribed by gendered traits. That dyadic gender roles and sexual dimorphism will fade with advancement of reproductive technologies, is also a concern towards these tales. Sextech

opened Pandora's jar in designing a gender just society that elucidated post human concepts of gender to explore postgendered, posthuman concepts in the classroom and included posthuman digital narratives to invert age-old fairy-tale texts to reconstruct the feminist architecture of postmodern anti-tales.

Feminist fairy tales depict how the blurring of gender boundaries is conceivable through the power of contestation by breaking gender stereotypes to debate patriarchal essentialism in order to articulate the quintessential feminist query about the sexist dynamics of the canonical tales. The socio-cultural contexts of the dynamics of these toppled tales celebrate the suppressed voices of the traditional tales and question socio-cultural institutions. The subversive feminist fairy tales are parodic and reawaken feminist consciousness. This feminist fairy tale genre as a tool of acculturation and socialisation highlights the naturalised gendered and sexual manifestations of the canonical tales by subverting the dominant ideology of the revised tales as transgressive and subversive.

The feminist revisions replace the hegemonic aesthetics of fairy tale scholarship. The mythical stereotypical world of symbolic motifs of the make-believe world is woven with feminist fantasy, gendered irony, eroticism, sexual violence and sadomasochism to reconceptualise gender within embedded discourses of gender and sexuality. The fatalistic visions of the masochistic female population by male writers have been challenged in these texts. Yolen, Carter, Namjoshi, Donoghue, the Irish Feminist Fairy Tale Collective and Hamilton enlighten the crepuscular arena of identity construction. The thesis, antithesis and synthesis of the feminist fairy tales lie in the celebration of female sexuality, female strength and female empowerment. The postmodern techniques of rewriting, parody and subversion in these feminist fairy tale texts use power to provide emancipating role models of female agency. The patriarchal paradigm of the saccharised tales emancipates women from patriarchal myths.

The feminist fairy tales rework the heterosexual paradigmatic structure of the society and reinscribes the canonical structure of the sexist ideology of the tales. The traditional fairy tales of Grimm, Perrault and Andersen are reworked to blur gender boundaries. Radical transformations of imbalanced power politics of age-old texts are debated and the intertextual self-referential tales that disrupt the encoded narrative paradigms of the canonical tales are reworked. The feminist tales vouch for a reconceptualised identity that is hybrid and polymorphous. The authors selected for study in this thesis champion the marginalised to subvert the notion of female experience with the universality of human experience.

Disenchantment and disillusionment within the patriarchal notion of male supremacy, gendered subordination or female subjugation are subverted through the postmodern notions of ambiguity, multiplicity and fabulation. The feminist fairy tale tradition debunks the myth of male superiority and female inferiority. The feminist revisionists echo iconoclastic messages through the sexist reductionist tales to review the approaches to women's lineage, race, class and sexuality. The feminist fairy tale tradition harps on self-efficacy, belief or conviction to successfully perform a given task or activity that fructifies through women's aspirations, achievements and affirmative action. This is done by breaking the glass ceiling which is a defacto-barrier to the advancement of women and all marginalised and ethnic groups.

Psychotherapy, agoraphobic heterosexism, overcoming gender disparities and trivialisation of women are discussed in the select reworkings. Feminist syndromes in dystopian literature and feminist dystopias critique gender to re-envision the strength of all genders. Thus, the socio-cultural and socio-historical diameters of the patriarchal supremacy of the traditional fairy tale characters in the female milieu is inverted to make sense of the lives of men and women and the rapport of both sexes in life and literature.

As gendered identities, and as expressions of the feminine, the heroines are stoic women who form an integral role in contributing their mite to society.

Fairy tale feminists ought not to complain of control or being dominated, but ought to emerge as proactive women of the human race and fight for their rights to envisage a gender just society. They ought to combat injustice, cherish maternity, revere motherhood, apprise womanhood and celebrate the hidden strengths of the feminine. The need for women to optimistically shoulder responsibilities and feel neither inferior nor superior as subjects of the human race, but act as path breakers is thematic of the feminist reworkings.

The select feminist texts echo the transformation of gender hierarchies to create empowered spaces for all genders by critiquing the tyranny of tradition and culture by women speaking and writing through their bodies in order to liberate the self. The female protagonists of the feminist fairy tales are role models who can do any role with pragmatism to engender social harmony to the changing order. A combination of feminine values and patriarchal ideals enable women to accost the problems of life and break the glass ceiling. Thus, women break the taboos of gendered inequities to coexist in a gender egalitarian society and this is the very purpose of feminist fairy tales and feminist fairy tale scholarship.

The pictogram of literature paints heroes and heroines of emotions and experiences on the canvas of life and depicts diverse strokes of emotions woven into a tapestry that magnifies the vitality of life and critiques androcentric bias. To resist being the 'angel of the house' and reject viewing the world from a male prism aids feminist fairy tales to address gender concerns under the rubric of gender studies and engage in gender neutral discussions to convey gender affirmative changes. Resilience advantages

in battling the inner struggles and expressionistic vies that crave for a sense of belonging. This is possible by breaking cultural norms and the tropes of subdual dominance.

The multidimensional roles of women and the marginalised genders must combat the skirmishes of struggles against racism, sexism and gender in the pursuit of human rights to overcome societal attitudes which discourage women's participation in decision making. The necessity for women to be proactive to achieve systemic change results in the creation of a just, humane, egalitarian society where social order prevails. The social rejection of competent women and devaluing the difficulties of women must cease. The select texts present how life would be hazardous if human beings as individuals do not comprehend personal and political emotions in the context of gender.

Themes like the concept of Panopticon, Foucault's power relations, Deleuze's theories of the rhizome and technologies of becoming, are concepts that highlight the need to overthrow gender disparity. From Post Freudian concepts to domestic discourse, gender cannot be pigeonholed to conform to social norms. The power of contestation to see like a feminist and recover subversion weave a tapestry of the camaraderie of all genders as they move to the post-feminist, post human, feminist futures of genderless realms beyond gender to envision the enunciation of a shared visualisation of democratic ethos.

This present study is therefore a contextualisation of the inversion of the canonical traditional fairy tales and reinvention of the feminist fairy tale texts and their authors to situate them in the context of gender studies. It attempts to study the select works based on the theme of celebrating women, gender and beyond gender in the context of blurring the boundaries of gender. Celebration of female consciousness in critical discourse and eulogising womanhood unshackle women from gender roles to welcome the theme of beyond gender or genderless existence. The select authors fictionalise the pursuit of the

quest to restructure society and weave changes in the way men, women and other genders perceive the world. As socially committed writers, they idealise and revolutionise womanhood by exploring personal and social relationships with a sense of social realism. In spite of the tales being told from varied cultures, all the tales are strikingly similar.

The traditional ideology that woman's life is not complete without man is refuted. All the feminist fairy tales reiterate that endurance of struggles is as painful as being alone. The heroines, desirous of deliverance, walk away from hegemony to disrupt the equation of male oppressor and female oppressed. All the select feminist fairy tale writers subvert feminist ideology and present female heroes as sensible human beings and not as "females" or feminists. The female protagonists overthrow patriarchal tradition and hardcore feminism to cut a path for themselves through the lens of a woman-centred perspective. Yolen, Carter, Namjoshi, Hamilton, Donoghue and the Feminist Fairy tale collective blend the ideologies of the androcentric and gynocentric.

Gynocriticism considers woman as writer to be supreme and recreates the mystification of the female body and expatiates the 'myth of the eternal feminine' with a reworked female identity in the feminist reworkings where the authors posit gender by depicting female heroes who in their search for identity emancipate themselves from patriarchal structures. The theme of sexuality challenge women's experiences depicted in the traditional texts by the male writers. The select feminist fairy tale writers attempt to subvert the male presentation of the female body. Their characters are encouraged to echo the identity of the feminine, feminist and female representations of a woman's body to assert egalitarianism.

Intersectionality reveals that irrespective of national identity, the select feminist fairy tales reveal how the authors amalgamate a global identity to echo voices of world literature. Carter is rooted in echoing the British culture and Yolen, the American. Emma

Donoghue is Irish-Canadian. Virginia Hamilton is Afro American, and the Fairy tales for Feminist Collective of *Sweeping Beauties* is an Irish Collective. Namjoshi has India as the backdrop. Carter addresses all her heroines from the woman-centred perspective. Thus, national identity is asserted by reworking feminist attitudes to interrogate the fictionality of patriarchy and queer identity in different cultures. Implicit in the fairy tales of Grimm, Andersen and Perrault is the critique of a society that lacks kindness, graciousness, humility, wisdom, tenderness and justice as pivotal qualities necessary to advance civility.

Women's contributions to social problems, their struggles and aspirations to question social conditioning, the theme of familial and social responsibility to erase gender power, broken promises, failure of family structures, rebellion, the problem of displacement, nostalgia, exile, assimilation, discrimination, hybrid identity and issues of cross-cultural perception are issues that must be seen not on a gendered level, but on a human plane. The tales transcend gender and ethnicity to develop a humanistic approach to ascertain individualism in the wake of exclusion and marginalisation. They re-negotiate identities by asserting the multidimensional roles of women in the pursuit of human rights by the proactivity of women to achieve systemic change to overcome sexual politics.

Feminist fairy tales have redefined literary theory by making it responsive to sociological, cultural, political and gender differences between male and female readers to emphasise power relations. Reconnoitering gender theories and their relevance through the texts with redefined ethics, gendered values and open-minded discussions in fairy tales and feminist fairy tales address gender stereotyping as pivotal in classrooms. Fairy tales like *Rapunzel's Revenge*, *Cinderella*, *Ride on Rapunzel*, *Ms Muffet and Others*, *Mad and Bad Fairies*, the works of Luisa Valenzuela, Fay Weldon, Olga Broumas; Disney's retelling of laugh at love at first sight and the false ideas of perfection are of creative and critical relevance in Children's literature. They re-create strong brave children beyond

sexist and gender roles as a discourse on femininity, masculinity and other gendered readings in reworking the feminine, masculine and queer characterisation of fairy tales and feminist fairy tales. Male stereotypes in feminist fairy tales and passive and active masculinities in the feminist fairy tale Disney films, explore gender ideologies through gender and fantasy.

The run-through of fairy tales and the reworkings in primary classrooms, high schools, colleges, libraries, academic discourses and learning spaces help to explore gender performance or performativity of gender as forecasted by questioning male fairy tale archetypes which promote harmful, deconstructing male perspectives in feminist fairy tales to reverse hegemonic masculinity. The positioning of fairy tales as juxtaposed to gender studies depicts that fairy tales need not be sexist. Gender myths are pooh-poohed and the themes of beyond gender and post genderism are elucidated. Queer narratives expose heteronormalcy in feminist fairy tales by queering 'happily ever after' and 'unhappily ever after' to question fairy tale morals. It raises the pertinent question- How can feminist fairy tales be taught in the classroom by representing female and male sexuality alongside other sexualities as the intersection of gender studies with fairy tales and feminist fairy tales?

This study also argues for subversion of gender roles and fairy tropes through a gendered lens by criticising and subverting traditional gender norms in the traditional texts. The need to represent the requirement for a greater diversity in the presentation of gender and genre is the argument of this thesis. The thesis looks at how gender was presented in the past in children's literature, how gender norms and gender tropes were and are being subverted, how genres like children's literature and young adult fiction were critiqued and how revisionist tales will have more diverse characters who deny the gender roles thrust on them just as they would redesign themselves in the future.

The need for children to reflect egalitarian ideals in feminist fairy tales explicate the under representation of women and the third gender in fairy tales by reworking fairy tales into a genre of relevance and significance. The characters in these texts are neither male nor female, nor of the third gender due to the subversion of gender roles. Thus re-conceptualising gender in Children's literature highlights the need to include these texts in the curriculum to craft a new type of gender expression to assert human rights. This genre of subversion communicates modern values to children and subverts gender roles to empower all genders to enable a pedagogical reflection that does not support feminism or masculinities. It attempts to resonate as to how antifeminist elements in the tales need to be subverted. This would aid the insistence of gender parity being taught to children who treasure fairy tales to uphold gender justice.

The gender analysis of children's literature empowers children to understand the metamorphosis of fairy tales into feminist fairy tales and the theme of subversion to challenge the sexist canonical texts by undoing dominance and subversion as relevant. The aspirations of inspirational prototypes for perfection as the "ideal woman" are a new understanding of how women have seen themselves in society. It elucidates as to how women ought to overthrow the gendered expectations of victimised women to visualise their confidence through the lens of male ideologies and perspectives. The internalisation of gendered stereotypes by male and female characters who question gender dynamics by feminist appropriations of androcentric theories are a feminist critique on stereotyped representation of women in male authored texts. The need for children and adult readers to resist patriarchal versions in male authored texts and rework dominance is of social relevance.

Future Scope of the Study

The application of gender theory to the interpretation of fairy lore is vital. A reading and re-reading of fairy tales reveals that from the point of view of anthropology, psychoanalytic studies, sociological and gender studies, the tales reflect the oppression of women and all marginalised genders. From the point of view of Men's Studies, fairy tales must be discourses, although masculinity studies may interpret it differently. Male stereotypes propagated by fairy tales across cultures ought to delve into male stereotyping, because the liberated tales in every culture's indigenous folkloric tradition attempts to counter the existent canon which projects regressive stereotypes of masculinity and femininity to children. Fairy tale retellings for children must represent modern feminist values devoid of misogyny. The future scope of study of this genre in music, dance, aesthetics, anthropology, philosophy, psychology, education, human education, value education and altruism would make the tales all the more relevant. The truth of a story always nestles longer in the heart and therefore feminist fairy tales for children could instil better thoughts and impart modern values right from childhood through this genre.

The extraordinary concoction of tradition, innovation and style of these multi-vocal pluralist tales and their revisionist versions intellectually and aesthetically challenge patriarchal essentialism. They enunciate the quintessential feminist enquiry about the sexist dynamics of the canonical tales. The socio-cultural contexts of the subtleties of these tales celebrate the bottled-up voices of the traditional tales. They interrogate socio-cultural institutions to reawaken gender consciousness by subverting the reworkings as transgressive and subversive tales. They invert the hegemonic aesthetics of the fairy-tale make-believe world of feminist fantasy by challenging the vision of the masochism of male-controlled tyranny.

The postmodern techniques of rewriting, lampooning and subverting the characters are in accordance with the theories of Simone de Beauvoir, Elaine Showalter, Judith Butler, Juliet Mitchell, bell hooks, Rosemary Tong, Anne Brooks and other feminist writers. All the authors emancipate women from the patriarchal myth. The heterosexual paradigmatic structure of the society reinscribes the canonical structure of the sexist ideology of the tales by reconceptualising an identity that is hybrid and polymorphous. The myth of male superiority and female inferiority is debunked through the postmodern notions of ambiguity, multiplicity and fabulation of the feminist tale to echo iconoclastic messages through the sexist reductionist tales.

The thesis addresses how the fairy tale corpus revisioned the stylised trajectories of women's lineage, race, class and sexuality in the canonical texts and revisionist tales. The duplication of male-controlled concepts of gender hierarchy; the stereotypes that tie together gender, sexuality, identity and violence as bedtime stories were adapted to depict how female protagonists negotiate the limits of their social space through self-assertiveness. The select women writers not only utilised the space of their domestic sphere, but also made brilliant use of their creative and imaginative space to project feminine hopes, dreams and aspirations. The magic charm and spells of the enchanted tales balance gendered socio-cultural ideological constructs. The historical diameters of patriarchal domination in the female milieu are pictured here to make sense of the lives of men and women and enhance the communiqué of both sexes in life and literature.

The resourceful feminine identities in these texts illustrate how the protagonists play an integral role in contributing their mite to society. It is for women as role models to don any role with pragmatism to engender social harmony to the changing order. Feminine values ought to blend with patriarchal ideals to deal with the problems of life by breaking the glass ceiling to climb the social ladder of equality. The circle of dominant

male experience and the circle of muted female experience overlap over a large and significant arena of gendered dichotomies.

The feminist fairy tales are made up of vignettes which urge the reader to break the taboos of identity, gender and sexuality to address the trauma of women as the marginalised. The feminist reworkings are significant for their cultural and shared experiences, reassurance building skills, social skills, communication skills, motor skills, historical significance, evolving nature and vocabulary boosters. The tales question traditional sexuality and the portrayal of gender stereotypes in socio-historical and cultural contexts. The representation of women as maltreated heroines in the old texts by the juxtaposition of the revived heroines facilitates an evolved expression of women's contribution to this genre through the discipline of women's writing and gender studies. It reflected on how women contributed their innate strength towards the shaping of the contours of new-fangled resilient heroines by contributing to the silhouette of feminist fairy tales.

The feminist texts interrogate social codes across cultures, interrogate feminist dystopia and gender dystopia and vouch for a gender inclusive society from sociological and gendered perspectives. Feminist fairy tales question the future as female and discourse on the future of gender to correlate gender technology and the future of work to unlock the future of gender equality. They design a feminist digital future and re-define feminist utopia and gender utopia to explore the treatment of gender in the genre of feminist fairy tales. Female readers have shown resistance to male authored texts in order to understand the patriarchal layout of the masculinist texts. They question as to how women's conscious struggles resist discrimination? How can sexist oppression be overcome? How have women's lives been affected? Have they shaped our thinking about

the status of women across cultures all over the globe? How has feminism and gender studies reconfigured the world of men and women?

Each feminist fairy tale text unravels an altered and yet novel experience of women with reference to race, class and sexuality. Each writer opens up a distinctive approach to the study of feminist fairy tales. Thus, this research thesis engages in stirring new innovative critical debates that have a relevant and inspiring impact on literature. The key ideas of the writers, the context in which they wrote, the evolution of their ideas and the reception they received in turn seems to be constructive in terms of newer discourses on gender and sexuality. The voyeuristic and fetishist responses, that the male order ought not to perceive women as objects of desire to dominate society, portrays not a masculinist or feminist agenda, but a gendered agenda.

Androcentrism is critiqued by women speaking and writing through their bodies to elevate themselves as role models who can perform any role with pragmatism and social harmony to the changing order. Feminist fairy tales combine feminine values and make up with patriarchal ideals to deal with the problems of domestic labour, marriage, alienation, identity crisis and widowhood. Women's economic position, domestic chores, division of labour, effects on female authorship, reading and culture are gender concerns addressed in feminist fairy tales in a subtle manner. The careless reader deliberates that fables are concerned only with what happens to women, but actually they address the concerns of all genders. Hence, androcentric theories and texts have been appropriated by feminist writers. The binary polarisation of male/ female are critiqued as the gender concerns of fairy tales. The revisionist reworkings of the fairy tale genre redefine the need for children to undo dominance and submission and challenge the sexist canonical texts to understand gender justice. The need to comprehend the aspirations of the modern

adolescent heroines to seek autonomy and emancipation revamps the security of family structures as essential for existence in literature and life.

The select texts address issues of abduction, childbirth, domestication, and cross over from childhood to adolescence or patriarchy. Female curiosity reshapes cultural underpinnings and contests the prescriptions of gendered perception due to patriarchal victimisation. Traditional gender stereotypes, androcentric narratives and gendered power structures are redrafted to envisage female heroism and gender socialisation. Motherhood, motherism, procreation, victimisation of women and role reversal are projected from the feminine point of view.

The feminist fairy tales showcase the lives of women and reconstruct male and female roles to transform gender hierarchies. They render the strength and charisma of women in a newer light to fight subjugation and strive for gendered security by flouting the customs of marriage, poverty and control. Feminist fairy tales discourse of miserable marriages that subjugate women, but accentuate the need to create “empowered spaces” for women by criticising the tyranny of tradition and culture and inspiring the marginalised towards a better morrow.

Yolen, Carter, Hamilton, Donoghue, Namjoshi and the Irish Collective and are all women authors from different geographies and cultures, but their works can be brought under the same umbrella. Despite being from varied lands, climes and philosophies, they hail from the similar ideological environs. The literary tradition and socio-cultural milieu of these writers testify a combination of liberal ideological feminism and ethnic feminities to harp on assimilationist feminism. Despite addressing differing cultural ethos from different female perspectives, they rework female subjectivity, female sensibility and feminist consciousness and focus on the role reversal of male and female protagonists. Each of them upholds a complex cultural position that is unique and distinct.

The select writers re-examine the totality of female experiences and probe into how the consciousness of being a woman affects the workings of the literary imagination. Each writer has a unique style, a far sighted fascinating vision, and blends creativity with gender and genre. Their tales reflect on the particular civilising process of their state of affairs in very specific ways. They have one thing in common: They lay bare the contradictions of acculturation and reveal how power works for women in gendered realms. They propose differing modes of liberation in keeping with the humanising process. Irony, sarcasm and farce are used to make a mockery of the abuse of power to proclaim that women are not mediocre or inferior individuals. Thus in society and literature, a female frame work of feminist research on the self-worth and dignity of women as 'women of substance' ought to be celebrated.

Feminist fairy tales are thus the agents of social change as they question gender issues to voice gender justice. The tales project an exuberance of the feminine expression, reinvention of allegory, sexual frankness, thematic innovations, techniques of writing, women's visions and aspirations in the literary horizon by incorporating a rich tradition of storytelling with reversal of gender roles and gender stereotypes. It addresses the need for celebrating women and gender and suggests that the postmodern tales are a prerequisite to emphasise on the need to celebrate women and all genders.

The Feminist Fairy Tale as a genre is an invitation to move beyond self-actualisation and think beyond gender as this is an era that is post gender and post human. It articulates a shared vision to look at gender, not in black and white, but in rich hues and shades of vibrant colours with creative and critical forms of expression to move beyond gender studies in order to undermine and elevate the very concept of gender. Life would be in jeopardy if humanity does not comprehend that all gendered identities live in an all-inclusive world where postgendered technologies, transhumanism and posthumanism are

moving towards a genderless domain. Like the creation of the stars, the sun, the moon and the clouds, humanity ought to re-envision realms beyond gender.

Life, like the snowflakes held in one's palm, dissolves, and as they do, human beings discern how different they are. The clouds in the sky, the puddles of water in the pond, the waves in the sea and even the rainbow are unique in their own way. Every pattern is so very different and so also the creation of each and every human being in general and humankind at large. It is for humanity to dare the difference; else the difference has to be dared. Life never confirms or confines to any single doctrine. Emerson's lines in his essay *Self-Reliance* are significant in this context where he voices, "My life is not an apology, but a life. It is for itself and not for a spectacle. I much prefer that it should be of a lower strain, so it be genuine and equal, than that it should be glittering and unsteady"(53).

The cartouche of literature paints human lives with power packed emotions and experiences on the canvas of life as life emerging identities on this planet earth, where all gendered identities must undergo a complete transformation in their attitude and outlook towards realising that each and every individual is unique and that gender has moved from what it was. Gendered or genderless, gender is a choice. Hence the present study as a cue is a reminder that all human beings regardless of gender are merely fragments in the mosaic of the existential spectrum of the universe. The survival of the human being in both life and literature is but a manifestation of vignettes and cameos of gendered identities which ought to blur conventionalist gender boundaries by celebrating women and all genders in life and literature as in the Feminist Fairy Tale genre.