

Bronwyn Reddan. *Love, Power, and Gender in Seventeenth-Century French Fairy Tales*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2021. xvii + 242 pp. \$65.00. Review by RORI BLOOM, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA.

In her young adult novel *Number the Stars*, Lois Lowry writes, “The whole world had changed. Only the fairy tales remained the same.” In her recent book on seventeenth-century French fairy tales, Bronwyn Reddan proposes a different thesis: the world changes and fairy tales change with it. To make her point, Reddan draws on the work of historians of the emotions to argue that love—something that many consider universal and eternal—does not mean the same thing in all places at all times. Her reading of texts written in France in the 1690s examines how a group of women writers grappled with the definition of this important emotion in a social context where women’s lives were strictly limited by the power of fathers and husbands. In so doing, Reddan complicates our understanding of “happily ever after” by reading seventeenth-century fairy tales as often ambivalent interrogations of early-modern marriage.

In her book’s introduction, Reddan provides an overview of various previous approaches to the scholarly study of the fairy tale—folklorist, structuralist, psychoanalytic—before identifying her own approach as socio-historical and defining her corpus as the works of seventeenth-century French women, specifically Marie-Catherine d’Aulnoy, Louise d’Auneuil, Catherine Bernard, Catherine Durand, Charlotte-Rose de la Force, Marie-Jeanne Lhéritier, and Henriette-Julie de Murat. She acknowledges her debt to scholars of seventeenth-century French literature (Faith Beasley, Joan DeJean, Lewis Seifert, and Allison Stedman), who have studied the importance of women’s writing and singles out the work of Sophie Raynard on *préciosité* and the fairy tale as an important influence. What is most innovative about Reddan’s study of love in the French fairy tale is her choice of methodology. Adopting Barbara Rosenwein’s ideas on emotional communities and Monique Scheer’s theorization of emotion as a form of practice, Reddan looks at the presentation of love in fairy tales not as the expression of a feeling but as the examination of cultural norms in seventeenth-century France.

In Part I—Formation of a Literary Emotional Community—two chapters portray these women writers as a group bound by shared literary practices. Chapter one demonstrates that fairy tales authored by women far outnumbered those authored by men in France at the end of the seventeenth century, but it also shows that these women formed a group defined not only by interpersonal but by intertextual relationships, as they often referred to each other in their writing. Moreover, in the fictional framing of many of their tales, these authors present reading in a social setting where literature creates a sense of community. Chapter two goes on to argue that in their writing, these women draw on a “shared vocabulary of love,” alternately influenced by Descartes’s *Passions de l’âme* but even more so by Scudéry’s *Carte de tendre*. For Reddan, Descartes’s “passions theory” of love as an uncontrollable emotion manifests more clearly in the works of women writers of an earlier generation (Lafayette, Villedieu), ceding to Scudéry’s “tender theory of love” in the works of female fairy-tale authors. Reddan observes that Scudéry’s map of tenderness provides a set of social practices that tames passion, making it more like friendship. By adopting this model in which the beloved woman may accept or reject her lover’s advances according to her inclination, the female fairy-tale authors question traditional patriarchal views.

In Part II—Conversations about love—three chapters examine the fairy tales’ treatment of love in key moments of courtship, from the declaration of love to its disappearance. Reddan is particularly interested in how the model for marriage in this period evolves from a socio-economic negotiation overseen by families to an emotional interaction between individuals. For Reddan, declarations of love in fairy tales help to promote this new model, but at the same time she concedes that women’s agency is still limited by the social norm of female restraint. Moreover, while the exchange of loving words creates a certain intimacy within the couple, Reddan grants that companionate marriage does not replace transactional marriage but does allow emotional concerns to be acknowledged within an institution structured by social and economic factors. Chapter four—written around a comparison of two versions of “Riquet à la houppe”—looks at gift-giving between fairy-tale lovers less as a transfer of property than as an effort at emotional reciprocity. In the version of “Riquet” authored

by Charles Perrault, the reciprocation of the lover's gift by the beloved seems to signify a consensual relation, whereas in Catherine Bernard's version, the offer of the gift signals coercion, but Reddan shows that even in the happy version Perrault's heroine is without real power. Chapter five examines the relatively rare but still significant unhappy endings of some seventeenth-century fairy tales (by d'Aulnoy, Murat, and Bernard) in order to argue that, despite their endorsement of the companionate model of marriage, these authors also admit that neither love nor marriage guarantees happiness.

Reddan begins and ends her book by addressing readers' expectations about the presentation of love in fairy tales, arguing persuasively that the seventeenth-century works of her *conteuses* did much to establish our twenty-first century ideas about this genre. At the same time, her own book slightly confounded some of my expectations, as I had anticipated more discussion of the authors' marital history, the characters' sexuality, and the difference between the treatment of love in novels and tales. Nevertheless, Reddan makes a strong argument that the authors whom she studies created the codes of a literary genre to critique the codes of their society.

Hubert Bost. *Bayle calviniste libertin*. Paris: Honoré Champion, 2021. 458 pp. 71.10€. Review by PARKER COTTON, WYCLIFFE COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO.

This collection of 23 articles from across Hubert Bost's career positions Bayle as operating between two poles: one Calvinist—supported by Bayle's apparent fideism and lifelong profession of the Reformed faith; one libertine—the critical, skeptical, and, of course, mocking Bayle, especially with respect to religious matters. This mapping of Bayle's positions is further charted by reference to four overlapping registers between Calvinist and libertine: the reasons for faith and belief; unlimited critical thought including the support of freedom of conscience; intellectual logic and scholarly knowledge; and finally political reflection. Additionally, Bost takes care to remind us of the "personal journey" that must inform our reading of a figure who often places himself as the impartial collator of historical facts. The strange