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The "cultural elasticity" of fairy tales (Kerchy 14) helps to account for the ubiquity of the genre as a whole for readers and viewers, both young and old. As Jack Zipes's important study The Enchanted Screen (2011) in part catalogues, Disney's adaptations of fairy tales have virtually effaced the names of such fairy tale "forefathers" as Charles Perrault, the Grimm Brothers, and Hans Christian Andersen. Disney's name and brand have now become synonymous with the fairy tale genre, in the process selling up a utopian illusion of happiness and security. As Cristina Bacchilega argues in Fairy Tales Transformed? (2013), criticism of fairy tale adaptations has focused primarily on literary and cinematic versions of the stories, as Zipes's study certainly demonstrates. However, this paper investigates the Disney franchise Frozen (2013) as an example of media convergence, to show how content flows across multiple media platforms (Jenkins 2), from print-based version, animated feature film, home video, music, books, art, collectibles, theme park rides, character meet and greets, and theatrical productions (in studio and on ice). All of these platforms feature versions of the same story that are consumed by participants, young and old, moving past the confines of the written text and animated feature film towards visual, acoustic, and kinetic new media regimes of representation. As Henry Jenkins argues in Convergence Culture (2006), corporations like The Walt Disney Company are accelerating the flow of media content across delivery channels to "expand revenue opportunities, broaden markets, and reinforce viewer commitments" (18). Frozen is no exception: child and teen consumption of Disney's billion-dollar franchise thrives primarily thanks to Disney's deft manipulation of media convergence.

While many studies of transmedia adaptations argue that such adaptations revisit the source text without replicating it, instead remaking or adjusting the story to suit the new temporal/spatial moment and changing audience expectations (Kerchy 9), Disney's Frozen does not perform that work at all. In fact, as I argue, that unchanging and transferrable quality of Disney's core quest and romance narrative is the main component of its cultural appeal and its ability to travel so easily across diverse media in its appeal to children and teens. In many ways I agree with Anna Kerchy's examination of adaptations as part of an intertextual web, where each element (old and new and newer) stands in dialogic relation to one another, thus "contributing to a dynamic modification of meanings" (9). Frozen, however, thrives not on dynamism, interpretation, or "cultural elasticity," but rather on the corporate control of consistent messaging across all levels of media. Thus, rather than encouraging the model of "collaborative authorship" (113) that Henry Jenkins argues is typical of contemporary convergence culture, the investment of viewers and consumers in Disney's Frozen is not participatory per se, as it does not inspire different knowledge communities to weigh in and create their own narrative responses to the text. Instead, in playing with Anna dolls or dressing up as Queen Elsa, young people assume the Disney ideology, as they pull on their "Elsa Deluxe Costume with Light-Up Bracelet" and blonde "Elsa Costume Wig." Viewers/readers/players know precisely what they are getting when they tune into Disney narratives. The brand identity that Disney has used to shape and standardize the very idea of the animated fairy tale and that has in turn become synonymous with happiness, homogeneity and utopianism, shapes most Disney products and productions, Frozen included, as Hans Christian Andersen's classic fairy tale is retro-fitted to Disney's contemporary ideology. (1) Disney's dominant visual intertext is its trademark Magic Kingdom Castle, with fireworks bursting overhead and pixie dust circling it. It is an icon that instantly evokes the power of magic and illusion, establishes audience expectations, and represents a branding moment that cannot be bypassed, even on DVD versions of Disney features. The similarities between this brand icon and the Castle of Arendelle in Frozen represent a cunning use of commercial intertextuality that connects on- and off-screen realities.

In spite of Disney creators' insistences that they are doing something ideologically different in this recent adaptation of Hans Christian Andersen's classic tale "The Snow Queen" (1844), Frozen actually follows the conventional teleological Bildungsroman plot, typical of Disney Princess animated features (The Little Mermaid, Beauty and the Beast, Cinderella, and so on). By virtue of this teleology, Frozen rearticulates the conservative values of the American dream: "independent and pioneering spirit, a safe moral home, and women's duty to become caring, docile, mothering, home-makers" (Kerchy 53). Anna and Elsa's story of true love follows and affirms Disney's classist and heteronormative patriarchal family romance, while constraining any and all rebellious feminine tendencies. Although Frozen pretends to "update" Andersen's tale by transforming the classic Disney love story into a love story between two sisters, the sisters' more "modern" behaviors and language are the red herring that many viewers latch upon, while ignoring the conservative gender ideology that still fuels the fairy tale. This ideology is in turn bound up with Disney's capitalist mode of production and commodity fetishism. In flooding the marketplace with spin-off commodities, storybooks, costumes, action figures, video games, and Happy Meals, Frozen embodies Disney's market-driven approach to transmedia adaptation that exploits its literary sources for their commercial potential, while performing a sleight-of-hand trick by suggesting that the animated feature is actually taking a more empowered and empowering approach to female protagonists than its animated precursors. The genius of Disney—and of Frozen, in particular—is its targeting of different audiences through diversified corporate advertising and merchandising strategies while remaining consistent with its conservative messaging. In targeting different "taste cultures" (159), as Jim Collins (2010) calls them, Disney allows different target audiences points of entry (and investment, personal and economic) into the story and into the corporate point of origin.

Leading up to its release in theatres in 2013, extensive promotion of Frozen occurred at Disney theme parks and Disney stores, and among other retailers. After its spectacular release, Frozen became one of Disney's most successful media franchises, including the animated feature, various theme park attractions, merchandise, video games, books, a Disney on Ice show, and a short animated film (Frozen Fever, 2015). In 2015, a feature-length sequel was declared to be in the works, with Chris Buck and Jennifer Lee returning as directors and Peter Del Vecchio returning as
producer (release date not yet disclosed). Disney productions also began work on a musical adaptation, which opened on Broadway in February 2018. In November 2014, TheStreet.com reported that "Frozen is no longer a movie, it's a global brand, a larger than life franchise built around products, theme parks and sequels that could last into the next century" (Lazaroff, n.pag.).

This is nothing new for Disney, as critics Paul Grainge (2008) and David Thomson (2004) note about corporate intertextuality. What was unique about Disney's new feature was its claims to be doing something different in terms of gender messaging. Broadway star (and voice of Elsa) Idina Menzel addressed the alleged feminism of Frozen in an interview: Frozen is "a bit of a feminist movie for Disney," she claims, "I'm really proud of that. It has everything, but it's essentially about sisterhood. I think that these two women are competitive with one another, but always trying to protect each other--sisters are just so complicated. It's such a great relationship to have in movies, especially for young kids" ("Frozen [2013 film]"). In the promotion of Frozen's supposed feminism, Disney illustrates Jean Baudrillard's point in Simulations (1983) that its ideology substitutes "signs of the real for the real itself" (4). In this case, Disney presents to viewers a hyperreal feminist fairy tale, a "real without origin or reality" (Baudrillard 2), a tale of ostensibly empowered young women who govern their own destinies. In Frozen--as Menzel's claim suggests--Disney provides a feminist story that America allegedly craves, when in fact, that alleged feminism is itself not 'real,' just something that Americans claim to want but cannot in fact tolerate, as the 2016 American Presidential election demonstrated to the world. If, as Baudrillard claims, "The Disneyland imaginary is neither true nor false; it is a deterrence machine set up in order to rejuvenate in reverse the fiction of the real" (25), by emphasizing its creation of a "girl power" story, Disney's Frozen makes viewers (and actors, it would seem) believe that feminism is everywhere in the "real" world, while concealing the heteronormativity that this story of two sisters (and the Disney worldview) in fact privileges. "Here you leave today and enter the world of yesterday, tomorrow, and fantasy," a sign over the entrance to Disneyland, California, reads. Disney's worldview is undoubtedly a comforting fantasy, one that is consistent across every media platform that it makes use of, as time and time again fairy and folk tales are reformed so as to fall in line with Disney's homogenizing (and patriarchal) ideology. As Thomas Leitch suggests, Disney's idealization of the American past across diverse media completely erases the American present, "the world of politics, ideology, social problems, and anything else that might undermine visitors' or viewers' experience of 'the happiest place on earth'" (252). It is a process of incorporating its imagery, brand, and ideology into an array of products and media that are then distributed widely (Elliott).

The centerpiece of Disney's 2013 animated feature is the fantastically popular musical number, "Let It Go," a song sung by Broadway star, Idina Menzel, a song that has become one of the most globally recorded Disney songs. (2) It is a song about Queen Elsa's preoccupation with "being a good girl" and "normal," and therefore hiding her true self. Elsa's refrain--"Don't let them in./ Don't let them see./ Be the good girl that you were expected to be./ Conceal./ Don't feel"--emphasizes the terrible burden that she carries as she is tasked with leading her kingdom but not being able to reveal her whole self, magical powers and all. On the one hand, "Let It Go" is a powerful song about freedom from repression and the need for self-actualization. On the other, the addition of visuals to the musical score counteracts that important message about personal integrity. Elsa is no different from the "frigid woman" archetype, described by Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar in

The Madwoman in the Attic (1979), whose transgressive powers mark her as different and "other" from the rest of society. Trudging uphill in the snow-covered landscape, Elsa sings about the "kingdom of isolation" that she now embraces, in which "it looks like [she's] the queen." She tears off her gloves and delights in the aesthetic and architectural splendors that her magic allows her to create. Although she finally achieves release from her fear and insecurity, this dramatic scene of self-actualization is utterly compromised by the visuals that accompany the song, as Elsa transforms into a supposedly "new" and sexualized woman, one who lets her hair down, and minces around, swinging her hips exaggeratedly. "That perfect girl is gone," Elsa declares boldly to the camera, in that moment transforming from girl to woman, a femme fatale whose transgressive power has become sexualized. Thus, Elsa's song--described by songwriting team Robert Lopez and Kristen Anderson-Lopez as a "power ballad"--is compromised by the power of the visual, as self-actualization quickly gives way to sex appeal. So much for female empowerment, as once again Disney's protagonist (eighty-one years after Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs) is coded as dangerous and threatening to the dominant ideology of the film.

Beginning with "Fixer-Upper," the subheadings of this essay epitomize various ways in which corporate adaptation unfolds materially, culturally, and economically. By way of an array of media and products, Disney distributes its heteronormative messaging on a global scale.

1. A "Fixer-Upper": Disney's Musical Adaptation of Andersen's Tale

Robyn McCallum (2016) notes that recent developments in adaptation studies have broadened to encompass pop culture texts, graphic novels, picture books, film remakes and spin-offs, as well as adaptations across new media such as computer games, Internet gaming, fan-writing, YouTube clips, and paratextual discourses like franchising, merchandise, and marketing (198). In this section, I wish to explore the particular transmedial adaptations that Frozen encourages across child and teen culture, and whose messaging remains uniformly consistent, thanks to Disney's power-branding strategies. Borrowing Linda Hutcheon's expression, "palimpsestous intertextuality" to capture the idea of adaptations as palimpsests haunted by other adapted texts, McCallum notes the seismic shift that has occurred in adaptation studies away from fidelity criticism towards a dialogic and intertextual model of analysis that "conceives of adaptation as part of a hypertextual web crossing genres, media and cultures" (McCallum 198), whereby the reader/viewer experiences the text in relation to a series of texts, and audiences are targeted by different media. As McCallum goes on to note, studies of multiple versions of the same text can provide the opportunity to examine the impact of changing cultural and ideological contexts and disclose the extent to which such adaptations and remakes can function as social and cultural commentary. (200)

But what happens when an allegedly "different" and "new" adaptation merely reaffirms conservative ideologies of days gone by? I argue that Frozen's so-called "feminist" update to the fairy tale genre and the almost fanatical obsession with this story in North American popular culture is emblematic of the "American way" in general: a cultural stance that pretends to be forward-thinking, liberal, and empowering to women, but that at its heart craves the hegemony of the "happily ever after" script packaged as a consumer romance. Frozen gives the general N orth American public exactly what it wants: the Disney ideology re-packaged and re-propagandized as feminist.

That is not to say that this essay will privilege the source text. Andersen's "Snow Queen." Frozen is not marketed as an adaptation per se. Small print at the beginning of the film announces that the film was "inspired by" Hans Christian Andersen's classic fairy tale. But, in fact, few six-year-olds would appreciate that Frozen is retelling an old fairy tale! In spite of this, producers of Frozen have regularly invoked Andersen's story when discussing Frozen, stating in but one of many examples that Elsa was originally conceived of as "a villain and pure evil--much more like the Hans Christian Andersen tale. We started out with an evil female villain and an innocent female heroine and the ending involved a big epic battle with
snow monsters that Elsa had created” (Hibberd n.pag.). Thus, Frozen exemplifies one of the fundamental truths of a successful adaptation, according to Linda Hutcheon's maxim, that it must work "for both knowing and unknowing audiences” (212), which it obviously does. Young people and adults alike are drawn to the admittedly enjoyable feature, whether they realize they are watching an adaptation or not. Versions of Frozen that circulate at Epcot and in Disney stores, on ice, on the sea, and on Broadway, are much more familiar to the general North American audience than Andersen's 1844 fairy tale actually is, demonstrating Disney's transmedia synergies and its successful streamlining of content across media platforms. For Hutcheon—as for Frozen—adaptation is both "product and "process" of creation and reception, a text that engages audiences in a particularly immersive and experiential way. Frozen and "The Snow Queen" are kept alive every time they are adapted.

In truth, Disney floods the market with adaptations and tie-in merchandise of its own stories in an attempt to secure ownership of its cultural and intellectual property. The princess archetype is a perfect example of this phenomenon. Interestingly, during the creation process, Disney's production team chose to rebrand the two central protagonists of Frozen—Elsa and Anna—as royal and, in so doing, expand the commercial possibilities of the story by banking on Disney's furiously popular princess line of merchandise. In Cinderella Ate My Daughter (2011), author and social critic Peggy Orenstein describes the invention of Disney princesses in 2000 as a marketing initiative led by Nike executive Andy Mooney after he travelled to Phoenix to check out the Disney on Ice show and found himself in an audience of little girls in (gasp!) homemade princess costumes. From that day forward, the label "Princess" became a massive branding opportunity for Disney, one that addresses consumers' "unspoken, nonrational wishes" (23) for comfort and stability, one that provides "a common language of childhood fun" (24), and perhaps even more tellingly, a desire for safety, because, as Orenstein goes on to note, the Princess craze took off in the months following 9/11. The "desire to encourage our girls' imperial fantasies is, at least in part, a reaction to a newly unstable world. We need their innocence not only for consumerist but for spiritual redemption" (25), Orenstein suggests. Within a year, sales of Disney princess merchandise soared to $300 million US; by 2009, it was at $4 billion US (Orenstein 14). "Princess has not only become the fastest-growing brand the company has ever created, it is the largest franchise on the planet for girls ages two to six" (Orenstein 14). Frozen jumped on this royal br(ant)wagon, the power of its fairy tale narrative already secured by audiences' familiarity with the princess archetype that the film inserts into Andersen's narrative, as both Elsa and Anna are schooled to "become caring, docile, mothering, home-makers” (Kerchy 53) of the American dream.

Nevertheless, it is helpful to examine particular ideas, tropes, and characters that were initially developed in Andersen's fairy tale to understand what Disney is redeploying across contemporary media platforms. In one interview, producer Peter Del Vecchio downplays the adaptive relationship between Frozen and "The Snow Queen": "Inspired by' means exactly that. There is snow and there is ice and there is a Queen, but other than that, we depart from it quite a bit. We do try to bring scope and the scale that you would expect but do it in a way that we can understand the characters and relate to them" (Connolly n.pag.). The two stories undoubtedly share some very basic similarities: snow, magic, trolls, a reindeer, two central characters, and a journey through a hostile, northern landscape. Apart from that, however, both versions diverge radically from each other. Disney appropriates the parts to create its own whole.

In terms of characterization, Andersen employs Gerda and Kai, a working-class girl and boy of humble beginnings, who live in an unnamed crowded town, as his central characters. Unlike in Frozen, Gerda and Kai are neither related, nor are they royal: "They weren't brother and sister, but they were as fond of each other as if they had been" (Andersen 2), "True love" between the two is never mentioned, but Gerda's platonic love for her friend certainly motivates her to find him after he disappears. The little boy Kai is repurposed in Frozen as the Elsa character. After he arrogantly pronounces that he would like the Snow Queen to visit him so that he could "put her on the hot stove and she'll melt" (3), Kai is wooed away from the crowded town and his little friend Gerda by the Snow Queen herself, who holds him spellbound as they travel back to her palace in Spitsbergen. Kai's first vision of the Snow Queen through his bedroom window obviously inspired the direction the Disney production team would take with Elsa, imagining this powerful sorceress as a magnificent snowflake personified:

This flake grew larger and larger, and at last turned into the complete shape of a lady, dressed in the finest white gauze, which seemed to be made out of millions of star-shaped flakes. She was very pretty and delicate, but she was of ice, blinding, dazzling ice; yet she was alive. Her eyes gazed out like two bright stars, but there was no rest or quietness in them. (Andersen 3)

Andersen imagines the Snow Queen as a threatening sorceress, undoubtedly inspiring such twentieth- and twenty-first century ice queens as C.S. Lewis's Queen Jadis in The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe, Philip Pullman's Mrs. Coulter in The Golden Compass, and of course Disney's Queen Elsa.

But the source of mischief and conflict in Andersen's narrative is one of the most significant differences that exists between these two texts. Whereas Elsa must learn to control her magical powers and in the process exiles herself to protect her beloved sister and the people of Arendelle, Kai falls victim to villainous trolls, who manufacture a magical looking-glass that distorts the world. Shards from this broken looking-glass—if they fall into peoples' eyes and hearts—cause them to see "everything crooked," as though there were something wrong in everything (Andersen 2). If a piece got into their hearts, "the heart became just like a lump of ice" (2). Kai falls victim to this troll-glass, and because of this, his temperament changes, and he becomes contrary and troublesome to his loyal friend, Gerda. Thus, although magic is certainly at the heart of the conflict in both Andersen's and Disney's stories, the characters' control over this magic differs radically. Whereas Kai falls victim to an object over which he ultimately has no control (a magic looking-glass), Elsa learns at a very young age that there is something inherently dangerous about herself, about which she feels great shame and fear. When Elsa's wondrous power to produce snow accidentally harms Anna, the King's fearful accusation, "What have you done? This is getting out of hand," immediately codes Elsa's powers as dangerous, frightening, and most importantly, transgressive, to viewers watching. Wonder at Elsa's magic is instantly replaced by deep shame and fear of the awful potential that she conceals beneath her blonde exterior. The advice the King gives to his frightened daughter speaks volumes to the pressure to "conceal" and "not feel" that becomes their new and repressive mantra. Elsa dons gloves so that she won't "infect" anything or anyone with her touch. The King's public response to Elsa's magic is to isolate the royal family from their people, keep them shut away/imprisoned until Elsa can learn to conceal her transgressive impulses. (Rochester's imprisonment of his allegedly "mad" first wife, Bertha Mason, in Jane Eyre springs to mind here.) It is a radical decision that provokes radical effects: Anna is traumatized by her sister's strange reclusiveness. This terrible rupture is captured in one of the animated feature's musical numbers, "Do You Want to Build a Snowman?: "We used to be best buddies ... / but now we're not. / I wish you had built a snowman, / instead of this thing that's wrong." Anna sings mournfully. This number beautifully captures Anna's loneliness and isolation as she roams the empty corridors of the castle, friendless and alone, "watching the hours tick by," thoroughly puzzled by her sister's strange behavior, behavior that has been coded by Disney as both threatening and distinctly feminine.

Anna's isolation and the profound claustrophobia she feels in the castle after the tragic deaths of the King and Queen at sea provoke her rebellion
the day of Elsa's coming of age and coronation. Again, this transformation marks quite a distinct departure from Andersen's fairy tale and serves to
showcase the conservative Disney ideology that shapes the Frozen brand franchise as a whole. To many viewers, this sequence offers much needed
comic relief (after all the death and despair) and two very catchy musical numbers: "For the First Time in Forever" and "Love is an Open Door."
Beginning the sequence with the awakening of Anna on coronation day—drooling, hair messy—initially appears to demystify the princess
archetype. Anna's musical number demonstrates how coronation day brings her pleasure and relief, the opportunity to meet "actual, real-life
people": "For the first time in forever ... there'll be music." Anna sings, "There'll be life. / I'll be dancing through the night." Almost instantly,
however, Anna moves from the statement "I can't wait to meet everyone" to the speculation, "Wait a minute, what if I meet THE one?" In this
musical sequence, Anna's excitement about the world quickly leads into musings about marriage, fantasies about the "picture of sophistication"
that she will present in her wedding gown once she meets her Prince Charming. Disney's catchy music smooths over the troublingly quick shift
Anna makes from feeling alienated from her sister to being noticed by a suitor. Supposedly a more "modern" heroine, Disney's Anna quickly
comes becomes defined by the dream of heterosexual love and sisterly love, so different from Andersen's faithful and heroic protagonist, Gerda. In
Frozen, Prince Hans of the Southern Isles steps in to play the part of Prince Charming, and "Love is an Open Door" is the musical number that
summarizes their rapid process of falling in love and their apparent synchronicity. Meanwhile, viewer and listener are carried along the virtual
Disney roller-coaster ride of heterosexual courtship.

As with many fairy tales and Disney animated features, the actual quest schools the central protagonist on her/his moral development. Kai
disappears with the Snow Queen, much as Elsa withdraws to her ice palace, and Gerda (the Anna equivalent in Frozen) is left to figure out a plan
to bring him home. Gerda (like Anna) sets off on a quest to find out what happened to her friend. Gerda's quest is a quest of fidelity, friendship,
and faith, much as Anna's is in Frozen, though in Anna's case it is motivated by family loyalty and love for a sister. Gerda's sweetness, her
perseverance, heroism, and her story itself are what earn her the respect of the people and creatures whom she meets along her journey, much as the socially
awkward Kristoff, the lovable reindeer Sven, and the quirky snowman Olaf, come to feel for Anna. In Andersen's fairy tale, the Finn woman, a
character with whom Gerda stays on her quest, tells the reindeer that the secret of Gerda's power is her sweet and innocent child's heart, which will be
repurposed in Frozen as Anna's so-called "true love" for her sister. "I can give her no greater power than she has already!" the Finn woman tells
the reindeer. "Don't you see how great it is, how men and beasts alike are bound to serve her, and how she has made her way so wonderfully in the
world on her bare feet? She must not learn of her power from us; it lies in her heart, it lies in her being a dear innocent child. If she cannot win
to the Snow Queen and little Kai of the glass, we cannot be of any help" (Andersen 16). Andersen relies on the sentimental "innocent child"
trope (popularized by Enlightenment scholars John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau) to codify the particular brand of powerful heroism
Gerda displays. Not surprisingly, this innocence carries with it a spirituality that is typical of some of Andersen's other fairy tales ("The Little
Mermaid," for example). Gerda's weapon that she is armed with, as she enters the Snow Queen's palace, is the Lord's Prayer, which causes her
breath to take the shape of angels, who resist the "living snowflakes" (Andersen 16) that protect the palace.

This spirituality is wholly dropped in Frozen, as it was also lost in Disney's adaptation of The Little Mermaid (1989), incompatible as it is with the
company's core values of innovation and technology, quality, community, storytelling, optimism, and decency (Disney Careers). Instead, Disney's
religion of romance takes over. When she finds Elsa in her new ice palace, Anna is armed by her "true love" for her sister and the hope that now
that they both understand Elsa's secret "for the first time in forever, [they] can live hand in hand." Musically, Anna's previous romantic number
with Prince Hans is repurposed in this sequence, demonstrating the easy slippage that Disney's messaging makes between the marriage plot and the
supposed empowerment of the main female protagonist. Anna's love for her sister is thus negotiated from within the confines of the heterosexual
tensions that direct the narrative as a whole.

The ending of Disney's Frozen certainly echoes the conclusion of Andersen's fairy tale, but emphasizes the romance, in keeping with The Walt
Disney Company's feel-good philosophy. Finding Kai alone and immobile, whose "heart was practically a lump of ice" (17), Gerda kisses Kai,
thereby saving him by the power of her selfless love, similar in a way to the "true love's kiss" trope that Frozen culminates with. Gerda weeps
warm tears on him, melting his heart and burning away the troll-splinter in it, and sings him a hymn about the roses that "grow in the valley, /
Where we meet the Jesus Child" (Andersen 17–18). Profoundly moved by the song, Kai bursts into tears (which in turn dislodge the splinter in his
eye), and becomes cheerful and healthy again. They return to the city with the help of the friends Gerda has made along her quest. Kai and Gerda
find that everything at home is the same, and that spring has sprung, both around them and inside them. Their childlike innocence is reflected in "in
God's bright sunshine" (18) that shines down around them, speaking to Andersen's "strong belief that children cannot survive without faith in
divine powers, and in order to save themselves, they must abandon themselves to the will of God" (Zipes Misunderstood Storyteller, 95).
Andersen's tale concludes with elements of a "morality play" (Zipes Misunderstood Storyteller, 95), with a celebration of childlike innocence, with
the affirmation that Kai and Gerda are "grown up and yet children, children at heart" (19). There is no mention of marriage or true love, just simple
companionship, happiness, and spiritual peace. Fascinatingly, Gerda is "innocence incarnate," according to critic Jack Zipes, and one of the few
female figures in Andersen's oeuvre who does not become "contaminated" by evil forces (Misunderstood Storyteller, 99), a long way away indeed
from Disney's tormented and sexualized Queen Elsa.

In contrast, although Elsa and Anna's relationship is a sisters (a minor) focus in Frozen, it is always mediated by the heteronormative relationships
that Anna develops, first with Prince Hans and then with the ice-laborer Kristoff. Elsa's accidental attack on Anna in the remote ice palace
provokes the film's abrupt transition from sisterly love story into traditional Disney romance. In a radical departure from Andersen's fairy tale, the
trolls in Frozen provide advice about overturning the spell that is slowly freezing Anna from the inside out, but their principal musical number
marks the film's narrative shift from family story to heterosexual romance. "Fixer Upper," while undoubtedly catchy, again hides troubling
assumptions about male-female relationships. In this musical number, the trolls sing about Kristoff, acknowledging his lack of refinement, but
"sell" him to Anna as a future marriage partner. "Fixer Upper" in this way is a contemporary equivalent to the "beauty and the beast" narrative: a
woman can transform into the man of her dreams "with a little bit of love." In the same sequence, the troll king, Grand Pabbie, confirms that
"true love's kiss" is needed to reverse Elsa's powerful spell over Anna: "only an act of true love can thaw a frozen heart," he tells her. Thus, Kristoff
races back to Arendelle with Anna lying weakly in his arms to return her to Hans, thinking that this particular type of kiss would come from
him, her supposed Prince Charming. At the climax of the film, the meaning behind "true love's kiss" is further destabilized, as the film
distinguishes between "true love" between sisters (minus the kiss) and "true love" between a man and a woman (with the kiss). Whereas Anna
looks for kisses from both Hans and Kristoff, Elsa bypasses the kiss altogether, by shedding tears of grief over her now-frozen sister and thus
breaking the spell. In this way, sisterly love trumps the sexual other in Arendelle, and poetic justice rules, as it always does in Disney's
saccharinely sweet happy endings. Anna punches Hans in the face, the sisters hug it out, and Kristoff and Anna finally kiss, producing the long
anticipated "happily ever after" ending that typifies the conservative Disney ideology and that governs the story on its multiple media platforms.
Although the film closes with the promise of sisterly community, it is the ringing of wedding bells that viewers are in fact left with.
2. Disney as Transmedial "Prozac for stressed-out Americans"

Often, as Jack Zipes claims, adaptations of Andersen's fairy tales jettison his religious emphasis to focus instead on the human qualities that young people need to protect themselves from a power monger (Enchanted Screen, 270). Although the quest in Andersen's fairy tale is both physical and spiritual (a quest to reaffirm the childhood "innocence" that both Gerda and Kai will carry into adulthood), Disney transforms "The Snow Queen" into a quest for love, ostensibly between two sisters, but wholly navigated in relation to men. This approach is typical, it appears, of Andersen adaptations, as Jack Zipes claims: "A fairy-tale film based on an Andersen fairy tale is never solely concerned with the Andersen text except as a point of departure to explore new cultural meanings and technical inventions, to experiment with aesthetic design, and to provide entertainment for a mass public" (Enchanted Screen, 253). Angels, faith, and God have virtually nothing to do with Disney's Frozen (or with any of its films, I would argue). Disney strip-mines Andersen's fairy tale of some of its most iconic elements and redeploy them in its corporate brandings of the story across multiple media platforms. In this way, the opening sequence in the 2013 animated feature that shows the huge ice saws penetrating the frozen water as the laborers harvest the ice serves as a striking metaphor for the "carving" up of Andersen's narrative to fit the Disney studio ideology.

This carved-up adaptation of Andersen's fairy tale has been a massive commercial success. Indeed, the Disney franchise and its shrewd talents in transmedia storytelling, in its use of film, television, music, video games, Web sites, theme park rides, books, comics, and collectibles, has accelerated the flow of media content across delivery channels to maximize revenue opportunities and broaden audience commitments, and to disseminate Disney's particular rebranding of Andersen's story to a much wider audience of consumers than would have been reached by the print-based version. "Marketers seek to shape brand reputations," Henry Jenkins writes in Convergence Culture. "Not through an individual transaction but through the sum total of interactions with the customer--an ongoing process that increasingly occurs across a range of different media "touch points"" (63). Thanks to Disney's transmedia synergies, consumers not only see the film, but also buy the t-shirt, the doll, or the costume replica proclaiming their passion for the whole package; visit Epcot to line up for the latest Frozen-inspired theme park ride; and meet with Anna and Elsa in front of the Castle. (3) "Expression can be seen as an investment in the brand and not simply an exposure to it" (Jenkins 68). In the process, consumers invest in the values of happiness, homogeneity, and utopianism that the Disney brand promises. The powerful economics of such expression can be seen in just a few basic statistics about the animated feature's popularity: Frozen has accumulated nearly $1.274 billion US in worldwide box office revenue. It is the highest grossing animated film of all time, certainly the highest-grossing film of 2013, and the highest-grossing Walt Disney Pictures release (to date).

Disney's Frozen media franchise integrates entertainment and marketing to create physical, emotional, and kinesthetic attachments between consumer and story to ensure further sales. These attachments are to a transferrable homogeneous narrative that is tightly controlled by the Disney corporation, across all levels of media. It is a narrative that Disney invites people, young and old, to immerse themselves in. "Be magically whisked away to wintry Arendelle by dazzling special effects and astonishing skating as you sing and dance along to inspiring songs including 'Let It Go.'" So reads the promotional material for the adaptation Disney on Ice: Frozen, an ice skating extravaganza that premiered in Orlando in 2014 and continues to tour. "Join royal sisters Anna and Elsa, the hilarious snowman Olaf, Kristoff, and Sven as they journey to discover that true love is the most magical power of all! ... This unforgettable celebration of love and friendship will leave your family with memories to last a lifetime. Experience the Full Story--Live on Ice!" The ejaculatory verbs and passive tense constructions employed in such promotional blurbs invite escape, mindless surrender to the machinery of magic, an emotional immersion in the heterosexual romance narrative and memorialization for the viewer, young and old. These performances invite viewers to "live the experience," to immerse themselves in a story or accompany particular characters with which they are already familiar (either through an interaction with Frozen itself or with virtually any other Disney franchise). Ice skating galas and even character meet and greets at any of the Disney theme parks promote the same ideology, so that the particular investment that viewers/participants/guests make is consistent across different media. Elsa & Anna's Boutique in the Downtown Disney district, the Frozen-inspired float that is part of the Disney Magic on Parade, and the Frozen Sing-Along Celebration all enhance guests' emotional and kinesthetic attachments to Disney's storylines and brand identity, and even allow consumers to act as Disney characters.

Some adaptations tell stories, while some show stories. Some allow readers and viewers to interact physically and kinesthetically with stories. Some, like Frozen, do all three. And that is the particular genius of Disney's corporate branding and transmedia synergies. In each case they accord with adaptation critic Linda Hutcheon's claims that "there is a sense of being 'transported,' in psychological and emotional terms" (133). The ideological thrust of all of these re-tellings of Frozen, however, remains carefully controlled and contained by Disney's corporate synergies. Frozen's rebranding of Andersen's fairy tale is entirely in keeping with the conventional values that are synonymous with the Disney ideology, values it fiercely protects: togetherness, unity, optimism, brightness, cleanliness, security, safety, protection, wholesomeness, among others. Such values are interwoven with "elusive memories of a golden era" (Hunt 100), where language and ethnic differences have been wholly transcended. And all of Disney's theme parks--Florida, California, Paris, Shanghai, or Tokyo, on land or by sea--in turn make this ideology tangible for consumers. As a "fantasy-wrapped amusement park" (Hunt 98), Disneyland was created to showcase the images and animation expertise typical of Disney's "Imagineers" (as Walt dubbed his team of art directors and animators) with the intention of transporting his guests away from their humdrum world of work and everyday reality, by way of stocking its playground "with pleasant but undemanding playthings" (Hunt 98). Time and space are irrelevant in Disneyland, a land that has its own special currency, and where regular paying customers are issued "passports" rather than memberships that make them feel that "they have made it, not only financially, but as well-adjusted and respectable members of society" (Hunt 103). It evokes nostalgia among parents who return to Disneyland as adults and realize that things may have changed, if only slightly. It communicates comfort and tranquility. Not surprisingly, Disney theme parks have high return visitation rates because of these particular feelings of homecoming, homogeneity, and heterosexuality.

Such theme park experiences have been carefully crafted by The Walt Disney Company, as Disney's careful overseeing of the hiring of employees proves. "'We're selling happiness'" (Hunt 102) is the mantra that employees learn at the "University of Disneyland" where they are trained to become "people specialists" (Hunt 102), adept at helping guests forget about work by immersing themselves in this cinematicized and mediatized world. As J.P. Telotte argues, films (like Frozen) provide life for the Disney park since the theme park functions as a location where visitors can become part of the filmic world through the principles of immersion and participation (171). The aim is to make guests feel like participants, to become a walking, talking part of this worldview, one that rules during the visit to the theme park and continues in the brand ideology afterwards. (4) Guests enjoy the safe thrills that these theme park experiences offer, knowing that they can immerse themselves in that comforting experience, "but also pass back, play at playing along" (Telotte 176). Thus, the Anna & Elsa Boutique gives guests the opportunity to "Transform into Royalty, " and visitors can "Meet Anna & Elsa in Hollywood Land!" and "Rub Noses with Olaf!", immersive experiences that offer guests a temporary
escape into the comforting fantasy ideals that govern Frozen (and the Disney worldview), and an assumption of the Disney living brand that will in turn produce consumer lifestyles. The corporate sponsorship by the Bank of America is a subtle and ironic reminder of the capitalist and American ideals that form the backbone of this fantasy.

Thus, Disney's Frozen conceals a conservative message beneath an attractively packaged and entertaining fairy-tale exterior. Disney's traditional narrative is bound up with the capitalist mode of production and commodity fetishism that seeks to shape the vision of the audience so that it wants to see and consume more of the same, as the ever-expanding Frozen media franchise attests. As Idina Menzel's claim from earlier demonstrates, within the narrative economy of the Disney studio, feminism is synonymous with sisters and the complex (and competitive) relationships between young women, which is in itself a troubling assertion. Add to that the film's heteronormativity and the focus on the marriage plot and we have another oppressive gender narrative, not a feminist one, repeated ad nauseam on a global scale thanks to the power of Disney's transmedia synergies. As Linda Hutcheon reminds us, adaptation is like evolution in that a story changes and through change stays alive. "And the fittest do more than survive; they flourish" (32), she declares. That viewers return time and time again to Disney's adaptations of fairy tales in general and to Frozen in particular speaks to the "unfinished business that adaptation continues to explore within contemporary culture" (McCallum 200), the "business" of illusion and ideology.

Notes

(1.) Disney's Alice in Wonderland (2010) presents one major exception to this claim that Disney's brand identity shapes all its products and productions, as Kamilla Elliott argues in her article about Disney's corporate merchandising strategies around Tim Burton's first adaptation of the Carroll novel (and the 1951 Disney animated feature). Elliott observes that much of the tie-in merchandise for Burton's film was unfaithful to the aesthetics and ideologies of the Disney brand, "confident that its firmly established brand could weather as well as profit from its association with countercultural, even counter-Disney brands" (n.pag.). This tie-in merchandise actually has a short market life, she observes, and eighteen months after the release of Burton's Alice, merchandise for the earlier 1951 Disney film resurfaced, replacing that of Burton's film, and serving to enshrine itself once again as "classic" Disney.

(2.) The casting of Idina Menzel as Elsa enhances the parallels that exist between Frozen and Wicked, the Broadway musical that premiered at the Gershwin Theatre in New York City in October 2003, not to mention the different implications these narratives leave their audiences with. Both are fairy tale adaptations; the former of Andersen's Danish fairy tale, the latter of Baum's American fairy tale. They are both stories about two girls who are (girl)friends or sisters; the conflict is structured around the opposition between angelic character and sorceress/witch archetype. Both are musicals about being different, and, more to the point, are at heart a love story between women (Wicked, especially). The princes/love interests are peripheral to the storyline, serving only to highlight the relationship between the girls/women. The central musical numbers—"Let It Go" and "Defying Gravity"—highlight the importance of being true to one's self. However, in spite of these similarities, the ending of Frozen focuses on the "happily ever after" marriage plot, whereas Wicked's emphasis is always on the intricacies of the friendship and love between Elphaba and Glinda. In this way, lesbian subtext appears to be more permissible on a Broadway stage than in a globally marketed Disney animated feature.

(3.) Disney theme parks offer one of children's earliest experiences with star culture, through the deployment of the autograph book. For Kathy Merlock Jackson "Star watching became a game" (209), with personal contact with favorite characters established by touching, hugging, and being photographed with them. This personal connection undoubtedly helps to reaffirm a guest's investment (personal and financial) in the Disney narrative and ideology.

(4.) Fascinatingly, Disney theme parks are predicated on the idea of a "mobile people," as J.P. Telotte argues in "Theme Parks and Films--Play and Players": "The new Disney Vacation Club, which promises to take members on carefully planned, 'safe' excursions to well-selected tourist sites throughout the world--effectively treating the world as a large-scale extension of the theme park--is just the latest extrapolation from this conception of a 'mobile people'" (172). Guests on Disney cruises, then, travel to places that have been pre-screened and pre-packaged for them as aligning with the Disney ideology, and in turn this pre-selection shapes how people respond to the places to which they travel.

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Disney’s Frozen shattered all expectations to become THE most successful Disney animated movie of all time, easily crossing the $1,000,000,000 (that’s a cool billion) mark worldwide. It’s also become a full blown cultural phenomena, as popular with critics as it is fans, and took home the Academy Awards for Best Animated Picture and Best Original Song. There’s now even a Broadway adaptation in the works and the trailer for follow-up short film Frozen Fever has just landed, whipping up another snowy frenzy once more. That won’t be the end of the franchise by any means, as the world has fallen hard for Ana and Elsa, and that spells a franchise for Disney. In theaters now, Disney’s Frozen 2 reunites directors Jennifer Lee and Chris Buck and producer Del Vecho with voice actors Idina Menzel, Kristen Bell, Jonathan Groff, and Josh Gad. Returning musical talents include Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez. KEEP READING: Frozen 3 Is Disney’s Perfect Chance to Introduce a Gay Princess. Frozen is a Disney media franchise, beginning with the 2013 American animated feature film of the same name, which was directed by Chris Buck and Jennifer Lee, screenplay by Lee and produced by Peter Del Vecho, music score by Christophe Beck, and songs written by Robert Lopez and Kristen Anderson-Lopez. John Lasseter, then-chief creative officer of Walt Disney Animation Studios, served as the film's executive producer. The original film was inspired by Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale, "The Snow Queen". For faster navigation, this iframe is preloading the Wikiwand page for Frozen (franchise). Home. News. A Broadway musical adaptation of Disney's blockbuster animated film Frozen is set to arrive in the spring of 2018. Frozen was released in November of 2013 and soon became the most loved, successful animated Disney musical in years, certainly since the studio’s “golden age” of the early ‘90s. It won Oscars for Best Animated Feature and Best Original Song, it spawned a successful soundtrack, a short film sequel, and even a Disney on Ice show. In addition to all of that, the characters were featured prominently in a storyline on Once Upon a Time -- not to mention the presumably millions of costumes for little girls on the last two Halloweens.