

Why Sleeping Beauty is Now Facing a Book Ban

A British mum of a six-year old has [asked](#) his school to withdraw the classic fairy tale *Sleeping Beauty* from its curriculum because it conveys inappropriate sexual messages.

Whaat? Well, if you have been listening to the post-Weinstein #metoo outcry, you will realize that the Prince's manner of waking the sleeping Princess – with a kiss – is non-consensual sexual behavior. A sleeping woman cannot consent to be kissed, and you must know by now that consent is the final frontier in sexual taboos.

This mum argued the Prince's kissing the unconscious princess instills dangerous messages in impressionable minds; but for an older group of students, it could become a useful tool for instruction about the benighted sexual values of previous generations.

I totally agree! I also believe that *Hansel & Gretel* should be removed from circulation until all references to "bread" are preceded by "gluten-free" so that young children with allergies and food intolerances need not feel ostracized.

By the same token, *Snow White* has to go, or else be rewritten: what negative messages we convey to our children about healthy eating when we tell them stories about poisoned apples! Perhaps we could change the apple for banana lollies, or still better, peanuts, considering the increasing levels of intolerance in younger generations.

Rapunzel, likewise, should be scrapped; men pulling women by the hair reeks of sexual slavery. *Cinderella* too, cannot be overlooked; that her foot was small enough to fit into the glass slipper teaches our girls the damaging message that size *does* matter: smaller is more beautiful.

Beauty and the Beast surely represents an early form of Stockholm Syndrome, with Belle becoming a voluntary hostage of the Beast in his castle. Exposure to that message has the potential to cause huge psychological damage!

In fact, on closer inspection, it would seem that all our traditional fairy tales are entirely inappropriate for children these days. Perhaps we should not even attempt a revision of the offending aspects, there are just too many to render the undertaking viable.

Possibly we need to dump these outdated tales altogether and create a new set of culturally appropriate stories for our children. One could be about the little ticking bomb that one day was wrapped in copious amounts of cotton wool – which is what today's stories about love amount to.

Shielding our young ones from fairy tales – where the romance is always about chastity and marriage – but making sure they are exposed to “positive” sexual messages such as “do whatever you want so long as it feels good and she says yes,” is, exactly, handing them a time bomb.

Funnily enough, if I were a feminist, (give me a definition and I'll tell you whether I qualify), I would hang onto the story of *Sleeping Beauty*. The princess falls into her hundred-year reverie by pricking her finger on a spinning wheel – clearly a critique of a society in which women are bound to domestic tasks.

That may be a long bow to draw, but not much longer than claiming that Prince's act of kissing his *betrotthed* as she slept is a form of sexual assault. Who knew the Brothers Grimm could be so racy!

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a thesis on the philosophy of science.

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