AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FAIRY TALES

A Project submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education, Educational Psychology, Counseling and Guidance

by

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This paper is an attempt to explore a way of understanding the unconscious contents of the mind through the use of the psychological concepts found in fairy tales. It is my belief that this understanding can be therapeutically valuable in working with clients to aid them in solving personal growth problems.

My interest in this approach to the unconscious began when I was in analysis with a Jungian therapist. In the course of my studies, I have explored the work of many psychologists in this area. In addition, I have read thousands of fairy tales and myths from many different cultures.

Genuine understanding of the fairy tale cannot be merely an intellectual process; rather, it goes hand in hand with an emotional process. The tale cleanses the soul, and purification of the soul, in turn, is necessary for the fuller understanding of the tale. We can gain much insight into human development from merely reading and studying these tales; for the deeper meaning and the full impact, however, these tales must arise naturally in the course of therapy in much the same way dreams are analyzed in therapy. The insight into the meaning of the tales for our own development is enlarged by the therapist. Left to ourselves to interpret a tale from
merely reading or recalling it, we are likely to interpret it one-sidedly in terms of our own most fully developed function. The therapist helps us to explore all possible facets of the meaning of the tale for our own growth.

I think it is especially important for us to enrich our lives today with the wisdom of these tales from the past. For us the fairy tale may become a healthy compensation against the overly technological and rational world in which we live. One single tale may open our eyes to the inner world of the growing and groping human being, as well as to the deeper meanings of human experience and evolution; especially, in our times, we need to illuminate the various truths from many viewpoints.

As a result of my reading and analysis, I have come to believe that the most complete psychological approach to the interpretation of these tales is to be found in the works of C.G. Jung and his followers.

In this paper, I will briefly explain the basic concepts of Jungian psychology as I understand them, interpret a fairy tale in the Jungian mode, and explain how this interpretation is helpful in understanding human development. Included is a bibliography I have found helpful in developing a broad background in the study of myths and fairy tales. For additional study
purposes, these references are presented within categories in the Appendix. I do not pretend that these references are exhaustive. These are simply the ones I happen to have in my personal library. It is included to give the reader an idea of the extensive references that are available for the person who wishes to know more about the psychology of fairy tales.

It is my hope that this presentation of my studies of fairy tales and myths will be of use to other counselors who wish to explore the psychological concepts to be found in these narratives. It is my belief that this background of study is of paramount importance to the counselor in his work with clients.
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ABSTRACT

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PSYCHOLOGY OF
FAIRY TALES

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Many psychologists have recognized the importance of myths and fairy tales in understanding human growth and development. They have used these understandings in their work with clients to great advantage. The interpretation a therapist uses is colored by his own point of view. Some psychologists have a very limited view of the use of these tales in their work.

The point of view emphasized in this paper is the one espoused by C.G. Jung and his followers. The information is gathered from extensive reading of both the works of Jung and Jungians and of myths and fairy tales from all over the world.

Included in the paper is a fairy tale, "The Three Feathers" as recorded by the Grimm brothers in 1819 in Zweheen, Germany. It is analyzed in the Jungian mode to
illustrate the use of Jungian concepts in fairy tale analysis. This tale was selected for analysis because it exemplifies a major problem of our society today, i.e., an over-emphasis on the rational to the neglect of the irrational. A careful study of the analysis of this tale should enable the reader to apply the same Jungian concepts to the analysis of any other fairy tale. This information should be valuable to the counselor in his work with clients.

The conclusion drawn is that the Jungian point of view is the most complete and comprehensive view of the psychology of fairy tales. It is recommended that the counselor extend his knowledge of the fairy tales and myths of the world and the Jungian mode of interpreting these tales in order to enhance his work with clients.

The purpose of this paper is to provide the counselor with an introduction to the study of the psychology of fairy tales.
PROLOGUE

The wonder is that the characteristic efficacy to touch and inspire deep creative centers dwells in the smallest nursery fairy tale—as the flavor of the ocean is contained in a droplet, or the whole mystery of life within the egg of a flea.

-Joseph Campbell
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Since the early days of psychoanalysis it has been recognized that there are important analogies between the events in myths and fairy tales and the psychodynamic features in human development. Freud not only called the world's attention to the Oedipus myth, he also commented on the meaning of Rumpelstilzchen, Red Cap and the Wolf and the Seven Goats. Therapists such as Rank, Fromm and Jung have made many fine contributions concerning the significance of various myths and fairy tales. They also must have incorporated some of the insights derived from these narrations into their therapeutic endeavors (Heuscher, 1974).

There is an intimate relationship between the tale and the one who received it. The "truthfulness" of the fairy tale is not simply objectively given but depends upon the ability of the listener to perceive the truth; this is largely the reason for the differing interpretations of the same fairy tale or myth by various persons. Rather than seeing the differing interpretations as
erroneous, we may recognize them as the particular truths which the reader has been able to grasp from the interacting images in the story.

Erich Berne and his group have begun to explore the usefulness of some of the well-known fairy tales for illustrating to the patient his basic life script, the games he is involved in, and his predominant transactions. In his last published book, *What Do You Say After You Say Hello*, Berne (1973) displays a delightful skill in linking the pathetic roles he recognizes in various myths and fairy tales with the problem of his patients. These tongue-in-cheek comparisons may be quite effective in helping a person gain distance and a certain amount of freedom from his problems. It seems, however, that this use of the tales destroys much of the deeper meanings to be found in them. There is much more to be learned from the narratives than simply freedom from playing dangerous and compulsive games.

Graf Wittgenstein makes a similar use of fairy tales, but his approach is more flexible, varied, and profound than Berne's. He shows how fairy tales can help the human being cope with his life, point to the goal of human existence and portray failures in the search for this goal. He uses the tales by stressing the importance of the client's own comments or associations to the fairy tale themes. The client relates the
stories to his own problems and, thus, may find solutions not known before. Wittgenstein's technique is to have the client narrate some of the common tales he remembers from childhood. The distortions that these tales have undergone in the patient's mind are seen as clues to his general human problem (Heucher, 1974).

Bruno Bettelheim, in *The Uses of Enchantment* (1976), demonstrates the value of fairy tales in his work with children. This book is a veritable gold mine of information on the meaning and importance of fairy tales in the child's psychological health. He provides the parent or teacher with clear directions on the use of fairy tales in helping children grow. Fairy tales, however, are even more important for use with adults in therapy situations. Originally these tales were primarily told to adults for their own enjoyment, growth and development. It is only in the modern age that fairy tales have been relegated to children. It is time to take them out of the nursery and return them to the adult population.

This study of the psychological significance of myths and fairy tales is culled from reading and studying the works of Jung and his followers. This project, consequently, will reflect a definite bias in the direction of Jungian interpretations of the narrative considered. It seems that Jung and his followers have
used mythical and fairy tale themes more systematically and creatively to understand the psychology of man and to enhance therapeutic endeavors than any other psychologists.
Chapter 2

BASIC JUNGIAN CONCEPTS

Most of the study for this paper was in Jungian literature, hence, many Jungian terms are used to describe the psychological concepts developed herein. These terms will be briefly defined in this section. Please bear in mind, however, that almost all of Jung's published works are attempts to refine and adequately define these concepts. Any brief definitions, therefore, must be inadequate to convey the true meaning of these terms. These definitions simply point the way of thinking about these concepts.

Jung has drawn a distinction between the terms "sign" and "symbol" as he uses them. The sign is a reference to some concept or object definitely known. The symbol is the best possible figure by which allusion may be made to something relatively unknown. The symbol does not aim at being reproduced nor can its meaning be more adequately or lucidly rendered in other terms. Indeed, when a symbol is allegorically translated and the unknown factor in its reference rejected, it is dead.
Joseph Campbell (1969) gives an analogy which seems to more adequately convey the Jungian concept of symbols. He writes,

A symbol . . . is an energy-evoking and directing agent. When given a meaning either corporeal or spiritual it serves for the engagement of the energy to itself --and this may be compared to the notching of the arrow to the bowstring and drawing of the bow. When, however, all meaning is withdrawn, the symbol serves for disengagement, and the energy is dismissed--to its own end, which cannot be defined in terms of the parts of the bow. (p. 178)

This leads to the realization that there are two kinds of thinking. One kind of thinking, related to the use of signs, is the directed thinking in logical sequences commonly understood in the use of the term "thinking." This is the conscious thinking of the ego. It is a more recent acquisition than the second kind of thinking which is spontaneous, imaginative, largely non-verbal and non-logical processes. The latter is the symbolic thinking which occurs in myths and fairy tales. This archaic, more natural thinking is the kind of thinking we find in our unconscious. Symbolic thinking is essential to any attempt to understand the psychological messages to be found in myths and fairy tales in the light of Jungian psychology.

These two types of thinking are exercised by two attitude types of personality which Jung called extroverted and introverted. The extroverted type is more
concerned with the directed type of thinking. In extroversion, the psychic energy is invested in perceptions, thoughts and feelings about people and things. This personality type is dependent upon and motivated by outside factors and greatly influenced by the environment. The extrovert is usually sociable and interested in what is going on in the outside world.

The introverted type is more concerned with unconscious symbolic thinking. In introversion, the psychic energy flows inward and is concentrated upon subjective factors. This type is interested in exploring and analyzing his inner world. The introvert may appear to others as being aloof and unsociable.

No one is completely extroverted or completely introverted. A person merely tends to be more or less extroverted or introverted. It is a matter of degree rather than absolutely one way or the other.

If a person tends to be more extroverted in his approach to life, he has an unconscious introverted personality. The reverse is true for the introverted personality. This means that a person who is predominately extroverted is capable of behaving and feeling like an introvert at times. An introvert will also, under some circumstances, behave in an extroverted manner.

In addition to the personality types, Jung distinguishes four function types. These four basic
psychological functions are thinking, feeling, sensation, and intuition.

Thinking and feeling functions are the two rational functions which tend to be highly developed in extroverted persons. Thinking consists of connecting ideas with each other in order to arrive at a general concept or a solution to a problem. This is an intellectual function that seeks to understand things. Feeling is an evaluative function; it evaluates whether a thing is good or bad, pleasant or unpleasant.

Sensation and intuition functions are the two irrational functions which tend to be more highly developed in introverted persons. Sensation is sense perception. It is concerned with sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touch, as well as sensations originating inside the body. Intuition is like sensation in being an experience which is immediately given without thought or feeling. It is different from sensation in that one does not know where the knowledge comes from. It appears to come from out of nowhere (Hall, 1973).

Everyone has in his make-up the possibility of operating in terms of each of the four functions. Each person, however, tends to emphasize the development of some functions more than others.

The personality types and the functions actually combine in many different ways in each individual. These
characteristics are always fluid and never static within the human being. It is possible to separate these dynamic psychic factors and observe them in ourselves and others. In life, however, it is always more or less elusive. There is a real danger of misunderstanding involved in attempting to use these terms as mere labels.

In dealing with myths and fairy tales, one deals largely with the symbolic thinking of the unconscious psyche of man.

To describe these unconscious contents of the mind, Jung has employed the concept of archetypes. Archetypes are rather like primordial images that become available to us through a study of the contents of the unconscious. These images are complex constellations of the archaic and primitive experiences which are available to people as a kind of potential possibility in the unconscious. These archetypes of the unconscious, which are available to the persons of a particular group and to some extent to people everywhere, are called the collective unconscious by Jung. When these archetypes are made conscious to members of a group, they are called the collective consciousness. Archetypes of the unconscious are made available to individuals through dreams, fantasies (active imagination), myths and fairy tales.

Individual consciousness and unconsciousness are made up of the same archetypes as those found in the
collective consciousness and unconsciousness. This is because we are all human and, to some extent, share the same potentials. As individuals, however, we are limited somewhat in the development of these potentials by our natural tendencies in the development of our personality types and functions, as well as by our experiences in our environment.

Jung isolated, named and studied the nature of many different unconscious primordial images. These archetypes are encountered in the study of myths and fairy tales. Jung gave these images names such as the persona, the shadow, the anima (the animus in women), the self, the trickster, the mother, the ego, etc. In the paragraphs below, short definitions will be given for the most important of these complex images of the unconscious. These archetypes will also be illustrated in Chapter 4 of this study where a fairy tale is analyzed in detail. It must be kept in mind, however, that an archetypal image is not only a thought pattern; it is also an emotional experience—the emotional experience of an individual. Only if it has emotional feeling and value for an individual is it alive and meaningful (von Franz, 1978).

The most important archetypes for the beginning student of Jungian psychology to become aware of are the
persona, the shadow, the anima (animus), the ego and the self.

The persona is the face or the mask we present to the world. It is somewhat consciously developed in the individual to meet some of his ego adjustments to the world. It serves the important purpose of allowing us to get along in the world of work, family, friends, etc. It is more or less the sum of the roles we play in the various social and economic areas of our lives. We are all familiar with the persona as expressed in the roles of professor, student, good father, good friend.

The shadow is all those aspects of our personality which are not being expressed in our lives at any given time. For example, when we are expressing a negative aspect of our personality we have a corresponding positive aspect which is not at the given moment being expressed. In our dreams and fantasies, this aspect of our personality usually assumes the same sex as the person having the dream or fantasy.

The anima in a man is his image of a woman. It is all the feminine aspects which he eventually can develop in his own personality. These are also the qualities he looks for in the women with whom he comes in contact. The animus in the woman is the corresponding masculine aspects of her personality.
The ego is the complex that holds all the archetypal images in our make-up together. It serves somewhat as the director of our personality. It is that which gives us a sense of continuing identity.

These definitions are quite simplified and are given here just to point the way to understanding for the person just beginning his study of Jungian psychology. Each of these archetypes is a complex of many different feelings, thoughts and actions. Each appears in the individual's life in relation to each other in a very fluid interacting pattern. Archetypes can contaminate each other or support each other. Psychic energy flows easily from one to another or it can be blocked or dammed up in one or the other archetypal pattern. The interactions of the archetypal images in a person either contribute to his overall mental health and well being or they create a neurosis or psychosis in the individual.

Jung immersed himself in the study of old alchemical texts as well as in the study of myths and fairy tales to discover the nature of these archetypes which he originally found in the unconscious of himself and his clients. These archetypal symbols of the deeper psyche are the carriers of the process of individuation. This is the development of the individual psyche in the totality of its conscious plus its unconscious components.
The goal of Jungian therapy is to achieve individuation through the use of archetypal symbols. The archetypal image which is developed in the process of individuation is designated by Jung as the Self. The Self, then, comprises the full scope of personality from its most generic attitudes and experiences, actual as well as potential; hence, it transcends the existing personality. Indeed, the individuation process can be said to lie at the core of all spiritual experience, since it is coequal with a creative transformation of the inner person; hence, it reflects the archetypal experience of an inner rebirth. In this sense, the archetypal image becomes an ultimate psychic truth and reality. Here, then, would seem to lie the central connecting link between psychology and religion (De Laslo, 1959).

When, therefore, one studies myths and fairy tales from a Jungian-like position, one is searching the literature for symbols of a psychological nature which will aid in the process of becoming more the person one was born to be. It is an attempt to move beyond mere ego concerns to a fuller realization of the totality of the self.
Chapter 3

MYTHS AND FAIRY TALES

There are far too many theories about the origin and distribution of myths and fairy tales to attempt to deal with them all in this study. Folklorists have attempted to study these tales from the historical, geographical, religious, psychological, and thematic points of view. Since this study is primarily concerned with the psychology of myths and fairy tales, this is the point of view which will be given here.

It seems most myths and fairy tales originated as folk tales which were transmitted by word of mouth for many generations until they were finally written down. These tales were related to occurrences in the communities in which they originated and to rituals which were used in religious ceremonies. Along very general lines, we shall find broad agreement among theorists that these tales represent efforts to explain and deal with the phenomenon of human existence. They express the ways people think, feel, hope, desire, believe, and behave.

Most of the basic plots and themes of both myths and fairy tales are found in almost the same form all over
the world. The basic plots of these tales are very simple. The characteristics are introduced in a never-never land setting at a time long ago, not exactly specified. The hero is faced with a crisis. Usually he is required to go on a journey to resolve this crisis. At the beginning of the journey, the hero meets an old man, an old woman, or sometimes a magic animal from whom he receives advice to help him make the journey successfully. Along the journey, he is required to go through certain actions. Usually there are three actions and a culminating act which clinches the ending. At the end of these actions, the hero is either very successful and lives happily ever after, or, in some few tales, the ending is catastrophic.

The basic themes of these stories are as numerous as there are psychic potentials in the human make up. A typical theme is magic sleep (which usually represents living in psychological unconsciousness) as is found in Sleeping Beauty. This story is found in more than 300 versions around the world. Other typical themes are rebirth, transformations, trickery, etc.

Some folklorists, such as Siecke, Stucken, and the pan-Babylonianists have tried to explain these similarities as migrations of the tales from one area of the world to another, but it has been difficult to establish just when or where the stories originated (Feldman and
Richardson, 1972). It seems more reasonable to assume that the similarities between the tales lie in the basic psychic similarities of people everywhere and to attribute the slight differences in the stories to the geographical and historical differences in the different cultures. In other words, these myths and tales indicate a basic similarity in the psychology of man underlying the cultural differences (Campbell, 1969).

The Jungian concept of the archetypes of the collective unconscious is based on these similarities of motifs found in the various cultures of the world. The archetypes of the collective unconscious are intrinsically formless psychic structures which become visible in these narratives. Any one archetype will manifest itself in quite different forms or styles as it is shaped by the canons of the particular culture and by the individual psychological constellations of the person experiencing it (Heuscher, 1974).

An example of this is found in the archetype of the transcendent Self. The goal of Jungian therapy is to achieve wholeness through the realization of this Self. This archetypal Self is found in its most ultimate form as Christ in the Christian religion, as Buddha in Buddhism and as Krishna in the Hindu religion.

Marie von Franz (1978) makes the most succinct statement to be found concerning the psychological
difference between myth and fairy tale. She writes:

_Fairy tales are the purest and simplest expression of the collective unconscious psychic processes._ Therefore, their value for the scientific investigation of the unconscious exceeds that of all other material. They represent the archetypes in their simplest, barest, and most concise form. In this pure form, the archetypal images afford us the best clues to the understanding of the processes going on in the collective psyche. In myths or legends, or any other more elaborate mythological material, we get at the basic patterns of the human psyche through an overlay of cultural material. But in fairy tales there is much less specific conscious cultural material and therefore they mirror the basic patterns of the psyche more clearly. (p.1)

A moment's thought will prove the truthfulness of this observation. When one thinks of the Gilgamesh myth, one thinks of the Samarian-Hittite-Babylonian civilization. Homer's _Iliad_ and _Odyssey_ bring to mind Greece. The Bible myths belong to the Hebrews and Christians. Myths generally have a beautiful form because generally either priests or poets have endeavored to give them a solemn, ceremonious and poetical form. This form is a conscious cultural addition. In some ways, this makes the interpretation of a myth easier than a fairy tale for things are said more explicitly. The same motifs may appear in both myth and fairy tale but in the latter it may be indicated only by a very small detail (von Franz, 1978).
For this reason, it might be simpler to become acquainted with motifs in the great myths of the world first, before attempting to interpret fairy tales. At any rate, a thorough knowledge of these myths is essential to finding and understanding fairy tale motifs (von Franz, 1978). This knowledge is necessary because myths and fairy tales are interrelated in somewhat the same manner as the collective consciousness and unconsciousness. Myths are more self-conscious than fairy tales.

Some scholars speculate that fairy tales may simply be fragments of dead myths. When a mythology has lost its major force in the lives of the people, the myths degenerate into fairy tales which the people tell each other primarily for entertainment. Other scholars indicate a reverse tendency. Namely, the fairy tales of a people are taken over by the poets and priests and escalated into a mythology which has the force to unite the people within a culture. It seems that history may indicate both kinds of action actually do occur in different situations.

It makes very little difference to the psychologist who wishes to use the psychological truths to be found in myths and fairy tales in his work. The crucial information for the psychologist is recognition that the mythology of a people is concerned with the areas of the
Fairy tales, however, relate more to the internal growth experience of a person as an individual. Thus the psychological material found in myths tends to center around such culturally recognized landmarks as birth, adolescence, marriage and death. Mythology provides psychological insights and ceremonial rituals of installation and initiation into the culture at these strategic moments in the individual's life. Myths, therefore, unite the individual experience of psychological maturation with the mystery of eternal recurrence within the culture.

It is important for the counselor to recognize where his client is in this maturation process. Very different tales would be appropriate for an adolescent's problems than would be for an older person suffering from psychological problems which seem similar.

Fairy tales provide the counselor insight into the psychological process necessary for the individual to experience at each of the critical stages of his growth. An examination of the plot structure of the fairy tale should now make clear to the counselor what this psychological process is. It will be remembered that the tale starts with a crisis. This is often the situation which drives the client into therapy or it may be a situation
which arises in the course of therapy. This experience in the life of the client is a clue to the counselor concerning which tale is appropriate to the particular client.

An examination of the archetypal images which occur in the client's dreams gives the clue to the therapist concerning which specific tale is appropriate to the individual client. Each tale should be examined to determine the archetypal images which occur at each important point in the plot. The archetypal figure the hero encounters at the beginning of his journey may be an animal, an old man or an old woman. The form taken by this image gives a clue to the psychological development of the client, which, in turn indicates the therapeutic need. The actions the hero is required to take and the aids he acquires for accomplishing these tasks are determined by the degree of psychological deprivation which is indicated by the character first encountered by the hero. An examination of the images given in each step of the action is necessary to ensure that the correct tale is employed with the individual client.

If the correct tale is used with a client in the appropriate way, the end of the therapeutic experience will be happy.
Chapter 4

AN ANALYSIS OF THE TALE OF THE THREE FEATHERS

The tale of The Three Feathers was found by the Grimm brothers in 1819 in Zwehrn, Germany. It has been selected for a thorough analysis because it provides an example which will illustrate most of the major Jungian psychological concepts. This tale also exemplifies one of the major problems of our modern culture; namely, an over-emphasis on the rational aspect of life to the neglect of the irrational. First, the story will be reproduced exactly as it was recorded by the Grimm brothers. The story then will be analyzed in the Jungian mode.*

The Three Feathers

There was once a king who had three sons. Two were intelligent but the third did not talk much and was stupid and was called Dummling. The king was old and weak and thought about his death and did not know which of his sons should inherit the kingdom. So he told them to go out into the world and the

*The author is greatly indebted to Dr. Marie von Franz for the interpretation of the major symbols in the tale of The Three Feathers.
one who brought him the most beautiful carpet would be the king when he died. To prevent any quarreling he went outside the castle, blew three feathers into the air and said, "as they fly, so you must go." One feather went towards the east, the other to the west, and the third just a little way straight ahead, where it fell to the ground. So one brother went to the right, the other to the left, and they laughed at Dummling who had to stay where the third feather had fallen.

Dummling sat down and was very sad, but then suddenly he noticed that there was a trap door beside the feather. He lifted it up, found steps descending and went down into the earth. There he came to another door at which he knocked and from the inside he heard:

Virgin, green and small,
Shrivel leg,
Shrivel leg's dog,
Shrivel back and forth,
Let's see who is outside.

The door opened and Dummling saw an enormous fat toad sitting there surrounded by a circle of little toads. The fat toad asked him what he wanted and he answered that he would like to have the finest and most beautiful carpet. The toad called a young toad saying:

Virgin, green and small
Shrivel leg,
Shrivel leg's dog,
Shrivel back and forth.
Bring me the big box.

The young toad fetched the big box, which the big toad opened and from it she gave Dummling a beautiful carpet, a carpet so beautiful and so delicate that it could never have been woven on earth. He thanked her for it and climbed up again.

The two other brothers thought their youngest brother too silly ever to be able to find anything so they bought some coarse linen stuff which the first shepherd-woman they met was wearing around her body and took it home to the king. At the same time Dummling came home with his beautiful carpet and when the king saw it he said: "By rights the kingdom
should go to the youngest." But the other two gave their father no peace, saying that it was impossible to give Dummling the kingdom because he was so stupid and they asked for another competition.

So the king said that the one who could bring the most beautiful ring should have the kingdom. Again he performed the same ritual with the three feathers. Again the two eldest went to the east and to the west and for Dummling the feather went straight ahead and fell down by the door in the ground. Again he went down to the fat toad and told her that he wanted the most beautiful ring. She again had the big box fetched and from it gave him a ring which gleamed with precious stones and was so beautiful that no goldsmith on earth could have made it. The other two again laughed about Dummling who wanted to hunt for a gold ring and they took no trouble but knocked the nails out of an old cartwheel and brought that to the king. When Dummling showed his gold ring the king again said that the kingdom belonged to him. But the two elder brothers tormented the king until he set a third competition and said that the one who brought home the most beautiful wife should have the kingdom. He blew the three feathers again and they fell as before.

Dummling went to the fat toad and said that he had to take home the most beautiful woman. "Oh," said the toad, "the most beautiful woman is not just handy, but you shall have her." She gave him a hollowed-out carrot to which six mice were harnessed, and Dummling said sadly, "What shall I do with that?" The toad answered that he should take one of her little toads and put it into the carriage. He took one at random out of the circle and put it in the yellow carriage. She had scarcely sat in it before she was transformed into a beautiful girl, the carrot into a coach, and the six mice into six horses. He kissed the girl and drove away with the horses and brought her to the king. His brothers, who had not taken any trouble to look for a beautiful woman, came back with the first two peasant women they met. When the king saw them he said: "The kingdom goes to the youngest after my
death." But the two brothers again deafened the king with their cries, saying that they couldn't permit that and requested that the one whose wife could jump through a ring which hung in the middle of the room should have preference. They thought that the peasant women would be strong but that the delicate girl would jump to her death. The old king agreed and the two peasant women jumped through the ring, but they were so awkward that they fell and broke their thick arms and legs. Thereupon the beautiful girl whom Dummling had brought sprang as lightly as a deer through the ring. So no further objection was possible. Dummling got the crown and ruled in wisdom for a long time.

An Analysis of "The Three Feathers"

As in most good fairy tales, the opening sentence shows the psychological situation. "There was once a king who had three sons." That is not the normal family for there is neither mother nor sister. The feminine element is missing. The sentence, "The king was old and weak and thought about his death and did not know which of his sons should inherit the kingdom" sets the problem, which is who should have the kingdom. The female element is necessary for the continuation of the kingdom. The main action, therefore, is concerned with finding this female element. To accomplish this end, the hero is not called upon to perform any masculine deeds. He is, indeed, not a hero in the proper sense of the word. The feminine element solves the whole problem for him and performs all the necessary deeds such as weaving the carpet, making the golden ring and jumping through the
ring. The story ends with a marriage which makes a balanced union of the male and the female elements. The general structure seems to point to a problem in which there is a dominating male attitude, a situation which lacks the feminine attributes, and the story tells how the missing feminine element is brought up and restored.

First, we deal with the symbolism of the king. The king may be taken as the symbol of the Self. Since the king is the ruler of the land and the entire welfare of the nation depends on him, he is representative not of the individual Self but of the collective Self of the nation. In many older tribes, the king represents not only temporal power but also the religious power of the group. We can say that the aging king represents a dominant content of the collective consciousness and underlies all the political and religious doctrines of a social group. The king is charged with the responsibility of keeping the political and religious life of the nation strong and alive. History shows us that this is a difficult job. There is a tendency for any religious or political ritual or dogma to wear out after a time, the people become bored, the ritual or dogma tends to lose its original emotional impact and becomes a dead formula. In some situations like this the old king is killed and a new king with new vitality takes over the leadership of the group, or the king may symbolically
bring new life to the old rituals and dogmas.

In this story the king is lacking a queen. The king has no way to renew himself. He cannot give birth to a child and, thereby, renew and recharge the vitality of the religious and political doctrines of the land. The king represents the masculine element, i.e., the rational, logical, thinking, objective, conscious part of the leadership. The queen represents the feminine element, i.e., the irrational, eros, subjective and unconscious part of the collective life of the nation. The feeling tone of the collectivity that would be provided by the queen is missing. The feeling-style and that eros-style in the society which influences how the people relate to one another has been lost. The king has lost the anima which softens his personality. Since the queen has been lost, the collective consciousness has become petrified and has stiffened into dead or almost dead doctrines and formulas.

The condition of the country at the time of this tale may be compared to the condition of our country before the 1960s shook us up a little. The collective consciousness was dominated by the rational intellect and the soul and feeling aspect of the people was in pain. People did not relate to each other properly and materialism went wild. Therefore, the missing irrational, feeling, eros, element rose up through
movements in the youth to soften somewhat the strong
deading effects of relying too heavily on the
rational and the intellectual. A love for the non-
material factors in life lessened the influence of the
materialistic view of life.

The king also combines with his three sons to be
the archetypal basis of the four functions of conscious-
ness (thinking, feeling, sensation, and intuition). The
king is the archetype of the main function of the society
which is thinking. The two sons represent auxiliary
functions of feeling and sensation. Dummling represents
the inferior function of intuition which is very weak in
this society.

Since the main function in this society (thinking
represented by the king) is what is causing the problem
and, since the auxiliary functions (sensation and feeling
represented by the two brothers) adjust very well to
the main function of the society, it is left up to the
weak function (intuition represented by Dummling who
does not fit into the society) to become the hero.

This process may be more clearly seen if we see how
it operates in the individuation process of the indi-
vidual's psychic development.

According to Jungian psychology, human consciousness
tends to always develop four functions in each man. One
of these functions is always dominant at the beginning of
life and if the child is left alone to develop without adult influence, it will automatically develop one conscious function but if one analyzes that person at the age of thirty or forty, one will find this four-function structure.

The king represents the Self or the archetypal factors which build up the ego complex in the individual. The main function of the individual builds up in the first half of human life and generally serves as a collective adaptation. The adults in a child's life watch his main interests and encourage him to develop this interest into a means to earn his living. For example, if a child is good at playing with practical things, the adults in his life will say that he will be an engineer later and the child is encouraged. At school he will be very good in mathematics, etc., and not so good in other fields. He will work hard at the things he can naturally do well and neglect other things that are harder to do. This one-sidedness slowly builds up the main function with which one adapts to collective requirements.

As the person grows older, he realizes that he needs more to live well than just his main ego function. The ego must become a little more flexible and achieve a certain plasticity which can be influenced through dreams, moods, etc., to adapt to the whole psychological
system. It would seem that the ego is meant by nature not to be a ruler of the whole psychological set up, but an instrument which functions if it still obeys the basic instinctual urges of the totality and does not resist them.

An example of the proper and improper reactions of the functions of the individual is given by Marie Louise von Franz in *Interpretation of Fairy Tales* (1978).

Instinct will inform you that you need to run away from a bull chasing you, you do not need to consult your ego to know what to do, your legs will let you know. But if the ego functions with your legs so that while running away from the bull you also look for a good hiding place or a fence to jump over, then the situation is perfect, your instincts and your ego function in accord with each other. If, on the other hand, you are a philosopher whose legs want to run away but who thinks "Stop I must first find out if it is right to run away from a bull" then the ego blocks the instinctual urge; it has become autonomous and anti-instinctive and then becomes a destructive nuisance such as we see in every neurotic individual. (p.44)

The king blows out the three feathers and the other three functions of the ego are developed. In this situation, it is the weakest function (Dummling) who becomes the hero. He is instrumental in bringing about a reintegration of the ego complex so that all four functions are able to adapt in a more satisfactory manner. In this way, the ego is able either to avoid or break up a neurosis. The four functions in a healthy
personality work together to help the individual to adapt to reality situations.

When children are told fairy tales, they immediately identify and get all the feeling out of the story. If one tells a child with an inferiority complex the tale about poor Dummling and how he wins the princess, he will immediately hope that in the end, he too will get a princess. The tale gives a model which reminds him unconsciously of all of life's positive possibilities.

The king in this story acts against his strongest function by resorting to the feathers to guide the action in solving the problem. This sometimes happens because all four functions are available even if weakly in the individual. It is this ability to go against his normal behavior pattern which makes it possible to save the kingdom or cure the individual in therapy.

The feathers represent the bird in which "the part stands for the whole." This is a magic form of thinking. Birds in general represent psychic entities of an intuitive and thinking character. The bird, therefore, in a sense, represents the soul and is so used in many different religions. Since the feather is very light, every breath of wind carries it. It is that which is very sensitive to what one could call invisible and imperceptible psychological spiritual currents. Wind, therefore, represents spiritual power.
Since the feather represents the soul and spiritual intuitive forces it is only natural that it would work to Dummling's advantage and lead him to the goal--the recovery of the feminine element for the family. Dummling represents the intuitive function in the story; which is the psychological source of religious insights.

Dummling, because he is naive and unsophisticated, is naturally led to what is right on the ground before his nose; here, he discovers the trap door. The trap door is a human creation and is a trace of a former human civilization. This indicates that the feminine element in the story had once been conscious, but had been allowed to sink back into the ground or the unconscious. Interpreted psychologically, this would mean that the unconscious not only contains our instinctive animal nature, but also contains the traditions of the past and is partially formed by them. The feminine element had once been a part of the consciousness of this culture (otherwise how would the three sons be present?), which is why there is an easy possibility of getting back to it. As usual, the hero is led underground (into the unconscious) to recover the repressed feminine element.

When Dummling goes down, he finds a door and knocks at it and he hears a strange little poem (see
story). When the door opens, he sees an enormous toad surrounded by a circle of little toads and when he says he wants a beautiful carpet, they produce it out of the box. The poem is related to the toad, especially to the toad's leg which is associated with witchcraft. It is specifically related to the making of witches' potions which can be used for either good or evil; in other words, it has power over life and death. It is the possession of the toads who represent the feminine element--specifically the uterus of the woman. It thus represents the maternal womb which is lacking in the royal family. The fact that the feminine is represented as a toad rather than as a little dog or cat or mouse, or other symbol, indicates the feminine in this case has been really badly neglected and has regressed from a warm-blooded animal to a cold-blooded animal.

The formation of this big toad with a ring of little toads at the entrance also shows that together with the feminine the symbol of the totality is constellated.

The symbolism of the carpet is related to the territorial instincts which are found in animals and in man. This territorial interest has great survival value. The nomadic Arab tribes who are famous for their carpet weaving say that the carpets they use in their
tents represent the continuity of earth which they need to prevent them from feeling that they have no soil under their feet. Wherever they go, they first spread one of these beautiful carpets with its usually sacred pattern and over that they put their tent. It is the basis on which they stand as we do on our earth. It also protects them from the evil influences of a foreign soil.

The sacred pattern on the carpet makes it represent not only Mother Earth but also the inner basis (or religious meaning) of their whole life. The carpet, therefore, is a symbol for the complex symbolic patterns of life and the secret designs of fate. It represents the greater pattern of our life which we usually do not know so long as we live it. We constantly build our lives by our ego decisions and it is only in old age when we look back and see that the whole thing had a pattern. Some people who are more introspective know it a bit before the end of their lives and are secretly convinced that things have a pattern, that they are led, and that there is a kind of secret design behind the action and decisions of a human being. Persons are led into Jungian analysis by a need to discover this pattern and meaning in their lives. This is why so many Jungian patients are introverted, religious people. This feeling of an individual life-pattern which gives one a
feeling of meaningfulness is very often symbolized in the carpet.

It is not, therefore, off the point if, along with the forgotten feminine principles, there are no longer good carpets at the king's court and they need one, for they have to again find the pattern of life.

This, however, is not enough and the brothers are sent off to find the most beautiful ring. The ring, as a circular object, is obviously one of the many symbols of the Self, but in this tale there are so many symbols of the Self that we have to find out what specific function of the Self is stressed in this particular symbol.

The ring has two functions besides its quality of roundness which make it an image of the Self. It symbolizes either a connection or a fetter. The marriage ring, for instance, can mean connectedness with the partner in a good marriage or it can be considered a fetter in a bad marriage. In either case, it works to hold the marriage together. When it is viewed as a fetter, sometimes it can lead an individual to seek the important growth which leads to individualization and the marriage is saved. In a good connection, the couple works together to meet the normal problems of living and growing through the rough places in life.
The ring in this story is golden which is said to have an eternal quality because it resists all the corrosive elements and lasts forever. The wedding ring is made of gold for it is meant to last forever; it should not be corrupted by any negative earthly influences and the precious stones symbolizing the psychological values needed, emphasize this even more.

The last quest for the most beautiful wife is a little harder for Dummling to get. He cannot just seize her as he does the carpet and the ring, but a special vehicle is needed. This is provided by attaching a carrot to six mice. When one of the little toads is placed on this vehicle, it is transformed into a beautiful woman, the carrot into a carriage and the mice into fine horses. The anima (beautiful woman) was changed into a toad and repressed (pushed under the earth or into the unconscious) by the old king when he began to live predominately in his thinking function and neglected eros. We see this expressed in Freudian psychology which does not value the female and emphasizes the conscious attitude of the rational "nothing but" theory of psychology. In this case the anima is interpreted as "nothing but" the sexual impulses in man. Everything must be explained from the rational scientific point of view; when this happens, a man's
anima becomes as undeveloped as the eros function of a toad.

The carrot which turns into a carriage to bring the anima above ground into consciousness is a phallic symbol. It can be said, therefore, that the vehicle which carries up the anima is sex and sexual fantasy, which in a man's make-up is very often the way in which the world of Eros first wells up into his consciousness. It is first carried there by sexual fantasies.

The mice represent obsessive nocturnal thoughts or fantasies which worry you whenever you want to go to sleep and keep you awake. Most of us have these experiences from time to time. When the mice are turned into horses the power that pushes us into action is provided.

When Dummling brings together the young toad and the vehicle, the toad turns into a beautiful woman. This means practically, that if a man has the patience and the courage to accept and bring to light his nocturnal sexual fantasies, to look at what they carry and to let them continue, developing them and writing them down, then his whole anima (feminine side) will come up into the light. A man is then able to relate more positively to everything in his life.

The third test still does not convince the king and the two older brothers. In the classic fairy tale
motif, there are three steps and then a finale. In number symbolism the number three is considered a masculine number. To really integrate the feminine the even number of four is needed. This fourth and final test is completely performed by the beautiful wife and leads to a new dimension.

In the final test, a ring is suspended from the ceiling and all the brides have to jump through it. The peasant women of the two brothers are too awkward and clumsy and cannot make it through the center of the ring. They are too earthbound and break their arms and legs in the attempt. They represent merely the sexual aspects of a man not his complete anima development. The youngest son's bride, probably on account of her past life as a toad, jumps through the ring with great elegance. The necessity of aiming accurately through the center of the ring is an outer symbolic action, it is the secret of finding the inner center of the personality and is parallel to what is attempted in Zen Buddhist archery. The whole practice here is meant as a technical help to find the way to dwell in one's own inner center without being diverted by thoughts and ambitions and ego-impulses. This emphasizes that the anima is not simply represented in the outer woman who is sexually attractive to the man, but is also an inner image of the feminine being which is the true ideal and the soul-guide.
of the man. The anima in man, in other words, is both inside and outside, it is both sex and spiritual insight for him. This realization helps the man to adjust psychologically to his life. The conscious and the unconscious work together to produce a balanced life. "Thus Dummling got the crown and ruled in wisdom for a long time."
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper offers the beginning counselor an introduction to the psychology of the fairy tale as interpreted by the Jungian school of psychology. It demonstrates briefly the procedure to be followed in gaining the necessary background for using myths and fairy tales in the therapeutic process. The presentation also illustrates the Jungian psychological approach to our modern culture.

Jungian psychology is unique in the attempt to correlate the psychology of the individual with what is called the collective unconscious. The collective unconscious refers to the unconscious psychological climate of the society in which the individual lives.

It should be immediately apparent that one reason the tale of "The Three Feathers" was chosen for interpretation is that this tale exemplifies the major problem of our modern culture. Our society places such strong emphasis on the development of the masculine, i.e., the rational, logical, thinking, objective part of life.
that it has almost lost the feminine element, i.e.,
the irrational, eros, subjective and unconscious part of
life. The result is a one-sided development of the
creative potentials of our society. We are a technologi­
cal society which threatens to destroy itself unless we
can restore the feminine element of love and caring to
its natural position beside the masculine thinking
function. The story further explains that mere recogni­
tion of the problem is not enough. The intuitive
function which has been neglected must be brought into
respectful use by going into the unconscious through
symbolic steps until the full potentials of the missing
feminine element are developed and whole health is
restored to the society.

It is important that the counselor recognize the
client in the context of the society in which the
individual is living. The pain of the client sometimes
has a strong relationship to the cultural situation in
which he finds himself.

This story also provides an example of the
essential inter-relatedness of all the Jungian psycho­
logical concepts. In this tale, it is made clear that
the individual and the collective problems are
essentially similar in nature. The archetypal images in
each are actually living complexes which are interacting.
These complex interactions occur in the development of neurosis or in the development of healthy growth.

The counselor who has become thoroughly trained in the psychological truths to be found in fairy tales will find this tool valuable in his work with clients. In the course of therapy the archetypal patterns in the client can be amplified by resorting to the myths and fairy tales which apply to the situation. Care must be taken, however, to insure that the archetypal patterns actually do occur in the client and that the amplification does help to clarify the problem for the client. To be effective, the emotional climate of the session should be enhanced by the use of the tale. The tale should not be introduced artificially into the therapy situation. The counselor should also be sure that the client is emotionally ready to perceive the truth of the tale for his own life before referring to the tale.

The chief difficulty with an intellectual, academic presentation of Jungian psychology lies in the tendency for people to believe that the psychic nature of man is static and can be reduced to a formula. Jung and Jungians are often accused of the heresy of mysticism because their presentation of the material found in the unconscious does not limit itself to a simple formula which can be applied by the counselor to an individual to make him psychologically healthy.
Whenever the symbols of growth and regeneration are taken out of context and discussed separately, there is always the danger that they will degenerate into mere signs to be assimilated intellectually and applied indiscriminately to each new fairy tale or client. It is only in the context of the particular situation that the live psychic process can be invoked by the counselor.

The detailed analysis of one fairy tale in the Jungian mode is sufficient to clarify for the beginning counselor the basic concepts needed to analyze any tale.

Armed with this knowledge, the counselor who wishes to learn more about the psychology of fairy tales needs to set himself the task of reading, studying and analyzing myths and fairy tales from all around the world. This information will help to give him insight into himself and many of the different personalities he will encounter in the course of his career as a counselor. Studying the interpretations other psychologists have given to the different tales will also add to his knowledge of human growth and development.

To experience even more powerfully and effectively the value of the fairy tale in therapy, however, it would be advisable for the counselor to experience the use of the fairy tale in a therapeutic experience with a therapist trained in the use of fairy tales in therapy.
As the counselor continues to study fairy tales and makes use of his study in counseling situations with his clients, his understanding of the psychology of fairy tales will grow wider and deeper. It will not, however, ever come to an end. The field of study is so large and so complex that it is never finished. It is an invitation to a lifetime of study and growth in the most important need for our times—the more complete understanding of the psychology of man.
EPILOGUE

We can never exhaust the depths of myths and fairy tales---of that we may be certain; but then neither can anyone else. And a cupped handful of the fresh waters of life is sweeter than a whole reservoir of dogma, piped and guaranteed.

-Heinrich Zimmer
APPENDIX

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