“BRAVE” AND “TANGLED” BY WALT DISNEY PICTURES: 
AN ANALYSIS OF THE CHARACTERIZATION OF 
NEW PRINCESSES AS WOMAN WARRIOR

THESIS
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Sarjana Pendidikan

Diane Elizabeth Nuhamara
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ENGLISH DEPARTMENT
FACULTY OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE
SATYA WACANA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY
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Diane Elizabeth Nuhamara:
“Brave” and “Tangled” by Walt Disney Movies: 
An Analysis of the Characterization of New Princesses as Woman Warriors

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“Brave “and “Tangled” by Walt Disney Pictures: 
An Analysis of the Characterization of New Princesses as Woman Warriors

Abstract

The focus is to analyze Brave and Tangled movie using a feminist approach. The study will evaluate the shifted characterization of a princess from Disney Princesses’ damsel in distress to the current woman-warrior characters of Tangled and Brave. The findings show that there are some shifted values implied in both texts which is delivered through the brave, leading and responsible characterization of Merida and Rapunzel. Secondly, women with their compassionate nature can perform a different and contributive quality in taking over men’s role of leadership and protection. The transformation proves that the patriarchal stereotype of women as weaker vessels have been broken down with their performance. Moral development plays a significant role in the princesses’ characterization. Secondly, despite the different development background of the two princesses experienced, the discussion indicates that there is a ‘woman-warrior- character in every woman which lies in their efforts of self-development and self-determination.

Keywords: emancipation, values, stereotype, damsel in distress, woman warrior.

1. Introduction

In a world where women are still striving to fight against gender stereotypes, an effective medium is crucially needed to promulgate moral values that can empower women. Feminist movements over the past decades had shown a lot of efforts by building their own medium such as women literature, newspapers, etc. which contains valuable documentary in their combat against gender inequality and stereotype. One of the most powerful and influential media that inculcates moral values is fairytale. Bacchilega stated in her book Postmodern Fairytales : Gender and Narrative Strategies, “Most visible as entertainment for children, whether in the form of bed-time stories or of games and prop marketed in conjunction with a movie or TV series, fairytales also play a role in education.” (Bacchilega,1955).

This is why under the oppression of patriarchal society, it is wise to functionalize fairytale that promulgate empowerment for women through the ideal role models portrayed through its
characters and the values given in its nature of fiction. Fairytale is one effective contribution of literature in directing women towards the aim of feminism and break patriarchal stereotypes, regarding the fact that it is widely consumed all over the world and familiar to every layer of the society and ages. However, current researches from all over the world find the early Disney Princesses destructive. The reason is because the princess’ stereotype creates a misleading role model of beauty, glorifying that beauty is the ultimate treasure for women in the struggle to find true love. Not to mention the lack of moral values they promulgate which only emphasizes on the princesses’ struggle in finding true love and the binary opposition of good and bad. Disney Princess movies (Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, Beauty and The Beast, Snow White, The Little Mermaid) are basically adapted from the original fairytales of the well-known European storytellers and folklore collectors of the history, Brothers Grimm (1812) ¹. These Princesses represents a “damsel in distress”. The word “damsel” derives from the French demoiselle, meaning “young lady”. And the term “damsel in distress” is a translation of the French demoiselle en déstresse ². It portrays women as a problematic, helpless lady, trapped in a tragedy plotted by the cruel antagonists in the story and eventually gets rescued by the so-called “prince charming”. The “happy ever after ending” of every fairytale is a manifestation of a series of events caused by the binary opposition of the characters’ values such as “good and bad”; “wise and sloppy”, etc. But are they still relevant with the issues we face today? The more time past, the more irrelevant the values of the early fairytales may be found. Raymond Williams in his book The Long Revolution implied that values in tradition as a general human culture can only become active within particular societies, being shaped, as it does so, by more local and temporary systems (Williams,1961,p.57). In reality, problems come every day, and a happy ending without any struggle is impossible. Therefore, a transformation of the princess character –

¹. "Grim’s Fairy Tale”. Wikipedia. Wikimedia
². "Damsel in distress”. Wikipedia. Wikimedia
within the nature of being an educative role model for women - is urgently needed to bring empowerment and a more realistic way of thinking towards the society, women in particular.

*Brave* and *Tangled* emphasizes the transformation of the princess’ characteristic through the shifted values it promulgates. The selected movies are the most current Disney movies that uncover the other side of princesses, assigning the princesses’ empowerment on the spotlight which contradicts the stereotype of *damsel in distress*. This thesis will search the answer for the research question:

*How does the values contained in Brave and Tangled represent the shifted princess characterization of the damsel in distress into woman warriors?*

2. Theoretical Discussion

1. Feminist Criticism

The writer would like to use the early second wave criticism approach in analyzing the woman warrior characterization of Merida and Rapunzel.

“The early second wave feminist criticism drew extensively on de Beauvoir’s work and on Kate Millett’s *Sexual Politics* which analyzed the system of sex-role stereotyping and the oppression of women under patriarchal social organization. Much of the criticism which drew on these texts and flourished, particularly in America in the 1970s, concentrated its analysis through cultural forms such as literature.”

(Rice, 2001,p.144)

Here, the writer would like to evaluate the transition of the princess characterization, by comparing the former *damsel in distress* characters presented in the early Disney Princesses movies such as
Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, Snow White, Beauty and The Beast, Rapunzel, The Little Mermaid, etc., with the emancipated characteristic of the woman warriors.

Based on the writer’s observation in watching Disney Princesses movies, ‘good princesses’ as represented in the Disney Princesses movies are portrayed as a submissive, obedient, charming, gentle and rather passive in overcoming their life obstacles as a product of patriarchal system. Elaine Storkey implied that the well-worn cliché of women’s stereotype defines that women’s place was at home (domestic), women were intuitive, nurturing, passive, instinctual, emotional, good with their hands, but easily distracted. Therefore, as ‘weaker vessels’, women need to be protected.

Brave and Tangled assigned as the ‘new princesses’ uncovers the other side of princesses, promoting the princesses’ empowerment on the spotlight. The woman warrior values which contradict to the damsel in distress values are projected through the moral development of Merida and Rapunzel. According to a feminist criticism journal, feminist critic seeks to examine the female experience, especially in comparison to the male experience which includes personality, education, childhood experiences, and anything else that defines the female identity (A. Debić.2002). This study will evaluate how emancipation can bring a more significant and relevant contribution in empowering women through fairytales.

2. Woman-warrior

According to the Merriam-Webster Dictionary, a warrior is (1) a man engaged or experienced in warfare; and (2) a person engaged in some struggle or conflict. Based on this definition, the writer interprets the meaning of woman-warrior as a woman who is engaged in a struggle to fight in a battlefield of the motherhood and patriarchal society’s oppression. The combat is conducted in the pursuit of happiness of dream accomplishments. Thus, the basic idea of their
struggle is how they can consciously reveal their inner voices as woman warriors. Regarding the self-determination that Merida and Rapunzel struggled to attain, the writer would like to emphasize their quality in comparison with men’s patriarchal stereotype. According to Storkey, men were seen strong, protective, hardy, analytical, objective and more single minded. Therefore, they enhance the role in leadership and protection (Storkey, 2000, p.12). Through analyzing the comparison, it will give enlightenment on how men’s stereotype of leadership and protection can be interchangeable with women’s, as they are presented through the woman warrior characteristic.

However, following women’s affiliative nature which is based on compassion, the approach of their woman-warrior characteristic creates a big difference with men’s style of leading. Philosophically, in Carol Gilligan’s studies of women, women’s morality does not center on rights and rules but on interpersonal ethics of compassion and care. The ideal is not impersonal justice but more on to the affiliative ways of living (Crain, 1992, p.152). This finding about women’s nature of preserving companionship and unity is also supported by Kohlberg’s sixth Universal Principles of moral development which obviously addresses both sexes’ (male and female) development. Kohlberg’s sixth stage (the Universal Principals) emphasizes on how we are keen to (a) uphold and protect certain individual rights and (b) settle disputes through democratic process (Crain, 1992, p.148). Here, the princesses’ struggle as woman warriors in creating a democratic atmosphere to overcome conflicts will be evaluated.

The writer signifies that there are three characteristic of a woman-warrior contained in the two selected fairytale which is: (1) bravery, (2) leadership and (3) responsibility. All of the characteristics mentioned are interconnected to one another. “Leadership” engenders “bravery”
and “compassionate” actions of emancipation, undergoing their “responsibility” as woman-warriors through self-determination and their compassionate nature as women.

3. Synopsis of the story

Tangled

A long time ago there was a kingdom ruled by a king and his wife who was about to their first daughter. Sometime before the queen was to deliver her baby, she became ill and the whole kingdom was obligated to find the cure for the queen. Deep in the country side, the soldiers found a magic flower that grew from a drip of sun which is known as the golden power. Soon, the queen was cured by drinking the water with the flower’s extract and baby Rapunzel with her golden beautiful hair was born. Once, an evil witch named Gothel had already discovered the golden flower and she kept the secret to herself and used the power to give her immortal beauty. Knowing that the soldiers had found the golden flower and took it to the palace, she became furious and kidnapped Rapunzel, because the magic of the golden flower only remains in her hair. She exploited Rapunzel’s power to stay young and kept her away from the outer world in a hidden tower deep in the forest. The king and the queen who were mourning for years after Rapunzel’s missing released thousands of lanterns to the sky each year on her birthday, hoping that someday their lost princess will find her way home by the guidance of its light. The lanterns were bonded to Rapunzel since the first time she saw them glowing in the sky on her birthday. To seek for the source of the light had been her dream ever since. Rapunzel grew up as a young beautiful girl who obeyed Gothel who pretended to be her mother since the day she was brought to the tower. Rapunzel was educated and given responsibility of housekeeping and was prohibited to get out of the tower for security reasons. Rapunzel lived her life believing that ‘mother knows best’. She always remembers what Gothel warning of the cruel, dangerous world outside the tower that is full of liars, traitors and greed. Reaching her 18th birthday, convinced that she is mature and independent enough to see the lights in person outside the tower, Rapunzel tried to ask Gothel for permission. Unfortunately, her mother forbid her even more and judged her. Being discouraged by her mother, Rapunzel’s dream became more and more insisting. One day, 3 days before her 18th birthday, a handsome young man named Flynn Ryder found the tower by accident. He turned out to be the wanted thief who had stolen the lost princess’ crown found the tower by accident. Shocked and anxious to encounter a man for the first time in her
life, and excited that she actually found a new friend from the outside world, Rapunzel made a deal which regulates Flynn to become her guide in seeking the lanterns. In turn of the favor, Rapunzel will return the stolen crown to him. Together with Pascal the chameleon (Rapunzel’s loyal pet), Maximus, the royal horse and with some help of the pirates of Snuggly Duckling restaurant, they finally found the destination and also the true identity of Rapunzel.

Brave

Merida is a princess of clan Dunbroch in Scotland. Her father, the king, was known as a brave man who once defeated the legendary bear demon named Mor’dhu. On her birthday, Merida was given a bow as a present by her father who encourages her to be a brave woman. While practicing, Merida encounters with wil-o’-the-wisp (atmospheric ghost lights resembling a flickering lamp which are often seen by travelers in the woods and is said to lead them to the destined location). Reaching Merida’s 16th birthday, Elinor managed to conduct a betrothal for her which Merida disapprove in the very first place. The betrothal involves four oldest sons as the suitors from clan Macintosh, MacGuffin, and Dingwall. Elinor warned Merida that the fate of their kingdom lies in her hands, therefore her fate as the future queen should be uphold in the first place. Unable to change Elinor’s mind to cancel the betrothal, the desperate Merida went to see a witch attempting to change her destiny. Led by the wisps, Merida reached the witch’s hut and asked the witch to grant her wish. Her wish will come true with only a bite of a cake which the witch had put a spell upon. Unfortunately, instead of changing Elinor’s mind, it ironically transformed her into a bear. Realizing she has made matters worse for herself, with the help of her brothers, Merida and Elinor return to the witch’s now deserted cottage where they discover that the spell will be permanent unless broken before the second sunrise. The witch leaves Merida a riddle, mentioning that she must “mend the bond torn by pride.” Merida’s strength and thought were deployed to break the spell. During the adventure with Elinor, their bond ties warmly. Facing so many misfortunes from the disappearance of the witch’s hut, fighting against Mor’dhu, a number of failures in solving the riddle, till fighting her own father, ‘The Bear King’, in order to protect her mother, Merida kept on fighting with all her might. In the end, Merida, her brothers and Elinor finally understand the meaning of “mend the bond torn by pride” which simply means “listen to each other” and the spell was successfully broken with a simple and sincere “I love you” uttered by Merida.
4. Discussion

4.1. Bravery

The word _brave_ according to Merriam-Webster Dictionary means the ‘quality or state of being brave’. This quality is shown in both movies, _Tangled_ and _Brave_, as it is already represented in the title itself. So, why is being brave that important? The two princesses were pushed deep down in a dungeon of oppression, to be accustomed in satisfying their dominant mother and patriarchal system of society. Here, they were “silenced” by their mothers, the most ideal role model as the embodiment of motherhood. Words are one way to oppress women, and since Elinor and Gothel carries the spirit of the patriarchal society, they tend to restrict the daughter’s self-determination which backlashes their ideal image of a good and obedient princess.

“Words were perceived as weapons. Words were used to separate and diminish people, not to connect and empower them. The silent women worried that they would be punished just for using words – any words.”

(Belenky, 1986,p.24)

Therefore, Merida and Rapunzel’s battlefield is to be brave to break the tradition in order to fight for their dreams. Two things that can be measured in assessing the princesses’ bravery is the amount of courage and adventurous nature they equip themselves with to fight for their aim.

In _Brave_, Merida’s adventurous nature was shown vividly since the beginning of the movie. Just by riding a horse, carrying her bow, practicing her archery skills, and climbing the _Fire Ball_ waterfall, the writer can vividly recognize her brave character. Based on the writer’s interpretation after observing Disney Princesses movies, (Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, Snow white and Rapunzel) the white horse is a very essential symbol in every fairytale, because it
represents the ‘media’ in pursuing one’s dreams, the true company of a warrior along their adventure. A horse is seen as the symbol of masculinity and pride for the prince. Without these white gallant horses, the prince’s adventure will be incomplete. This is seen from a patriarchal view on the early Disney Princesses fairytale. When Merida rides her horse, she made it clear how adventure isn’t merely the possession of men but also for women to enhance.

“I will ride, I will fly / chase the wind and touch the sky / I will fly / chase the wind and touch the sky” – Merida / “Touch The Sky” by Julie Fowlis

[00:07:16]

Having the courage in breaking the tradition is another brave quality that Merida posses. Rejecting the betrothal is a form of her liberation. She wasn’t afraid to tell her over-dominant mother about her passion and her ideology of pursuit of happiness, which for her, has nothing to do with marriage. Here the writer acknowledges the act of breakthrough which embodies rejection and the disclosure of the inner voice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Breakthrough Process</th>
<th>Elinor</th>
<th>Merida</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rejection</td>
<td>“Merida this is what you’ve been preparing for your whole life.”</td>
<td>“No! It’s what you’ve been preparing me for my whole life. I won’t go through with it, you can’t make me!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[00:12:01]</td>
<td>[00:12:04]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“If you could just try to see what I do, I do out of love”</td>
<td>“I don’t want my life to be over, I want my freedom!”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[00:15:04]</td>
<td>[00:14:56]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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“Listen..”  [00;15;18]
“I think I could make you understand if you just...”  [00'15;17]
“Listen!”  [00;15;19]
“This whole marriage is what you want. Do you ever bother to ask what I want? No! You walk around telling me what to do, what not to do. Trying to make me be like you. Well, I’m not going to be like you!”  [00;26;37]
“Merida, you’re a princess! I expect you to be like one!”  -- Queen

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inner Voice</th>
<th>“Listen..”  [00;15;18]</th>
<th>“I think I could make you understand if you just...”  [00'15;17]</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I am the Queen. You listen to me!”  [00;26;28]</td>
<td>“Listen!”  [00;15;19]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Oh you’re acting like a child.”  [00;26;48]</td>
<td>“This whole marriage is what you want. Do you ever bother to ask what I want? No! You walk around telling me what to do, what not to do. Trying to make me be like you. Well, I’m not going to be like you!”  [00;26;37]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Merida, you’re a princess! I expect you to be like one!”  -- Queen</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

In William Crain’s book, *Theories of Development: Concepts and Applications*, there are six stages of moral development based on Kohlberg’s theory. Here, Merida has reached the fifth stage of which is “social contract and individual rights.” Merida believes that she had come to the point where she recognizes her basic rights as a human being such as liberty and life to be protected (p.139). “Liberty” here means that as a 16 year old young woman, Merida had completely embraced her freedom of choice.

Rapunzel on the other hand, had quite an interesting adventure with Pascal the chameleon, Flynn the wanted thief and Maximus the royal horse. The writer acknowledge Rapunzel’s courage in conducting an escape with Flynn despite her little knowledge about the world which only came from the books and also all of the lies Gothel scooped her with about the cruel, heartless world.
Rapunzel’s breakthrough involves a rebellious act towards Gothel. “Rebellion” and “bravery” have a slightly similar meaning whereas “rebellion” means opposition to one in authority or dominance (Merriam Webster Dictionary). However, it is very important that both qualities are linear in the way Rapunzel carries out her actions to convey her “inner voice”.

“...as a woman becomes more aware of the existence of inner resources of knowing and valuing, as she begins to listen to the ‘still small voice’ within her, she finds an inner source of strength a major developmental transition follows that has repercussions in her relationships, self concept and self esteem, morality, and behavior.” (Belenky, 1986, p. 54)

Those things weren’t enough to hold her down from fulfilling her ambition to see the lanterns and explore the world. Thanks to Flynn, who made her realize about how important it is to get away once in a while, she managed to put aside all her guilt to her overprotective mother. Rapunzel showed that she possess that one very basic thing that any warrior should have, which is the courage to break through any oppression that hampers her accomplishment. Being kept in the house doing all the house chores are not relevant anymore for today’s young women and Rapunzel showed that self-determination and self-empowerment can only be obtained by taking the plunge to discover things with an adventurous nature.

“Let me ease your conscious, this is part of growing up. A little rebellion, a little adventure, this is great! Healthy even.” –Flynn Ryder [00;33;03]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Break through Process</th>
<th>Gothel</th>
<th>Rapunzel</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“we’re going home Rapunzel” – Gothel [00;56;39]</td>
<td></td>
<td>“You don’t understand! I’ve been on a wonderful journey, and I’ve learned so much!”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mary Field Belenky (1986) had suggested in her book *Women’s Way of Knowing: The development of self, voice, and Mind*:

“...women are like the youths in fairy tales (as we recall, usually male) who set out from the family homestead to make their way in world, discovering themselves in the process. Our women set out on this developmental journey with a sense of power in their intuitive processes and a newfound energy and openness” (Belenky, p.77).

This means that the nature of being outgoing which was earlier recognized as male’s stereotype had gone through a transformation. The transformation occurs under the awareness of women about the urgency to explore the world deploying their own strength, knowledge and self-motivation to embrace their freedom. So, Merida and Rapunzel with their curiosity as youths and awareness of their bright future ahead tried to do something proactively even with just a little
knowledge bestowed by their mothers. Compared to the chances the early Disney Princesses have to experience an adventure, these two princesses had shown that the plot of the story can go another way around because they have the same right to travel, ride on horses and determine their own destiny as woman warriors. Therefore, when the intuition came from their own minds, turning away from their comfort zone and taking the plunge to a world of million possibilities is the only way to pursue their dreams.

According to Piaget, “true learning is not something handed down by the teacher, but something that comes from the child. It is a process of spontaneous invention and discovery” (Crain, 1992, p.124). This is why young girls need to experience the learning by themselves by exploring all sectors or aspects of life including the educational, political, economical, social and religious aspect. Merida and Rapunzel are the most significant role models in comparison to the early Disney Princesses to empower women. Bravery as the most fundamental value and the first step in becoming an adventurous woman warrior allows women to explore the world and enrich their knowledge in various areas of development.

4.2. Leadership

According to Webster Dictionary, the word leadership means: “someone or something that lead others; someone who guides other people.” This quality is crucial for Merida and Rapunzel to own in order to fulfill the criteria as a “woman warrior” who can prove to the world that they are capable not just in leading themselves but to also lead their allies of both sexes; male and female. The leadership qualification is best to be projected through the whole adventure (in difficult and also fortunate times) where their capability in being compassionate woman leaders is tested. There are two essential roles that the writer believe can determine the quality of leadership, which is the role of a creative ‘director’ or decision maker and the quality of a ‘peacemaker’ over

“Web of conclusion, empathy, collaboration, community and family focus: The abilities of women are ideally suited to maintain the peace – making our presence a critical missing component among today’s ruling elite.” (Wilson, 2004, p.89)

In order to define these princesses as a leader, it is very important to compare and assess Merida and Rapunzel’s qualities with the male characters in the movie, to determine their position as the director or ‘decision maker’ of the mission they designed. The writer views the peacemaker quality as the complement of the decision-making position based on wisdom. This is the product of women’s adventurous nature which allows the princesses to expand their perspective of morality in the real world of struggle.

In *Brave*, Merida shows her quality as a creative director in switching the mother-daughter roles with her mother bear throughout the adventure. Of course, there will always be trial and error when things appear to be unexpected or out of plan especially since Elinor had to suit herself with the new state of being a bear. The changes caused her to lose the motherhood nature and become insecure of herself and all the changes. However, Merida can show her creativity as a leader by being responsive and taking initiatives whenever the plan goes wrong. Thus Merida was capable in providing the security and comfort that her mother needs. Merida’s struggle established her to become a true leader who can put aside her ego and prioritize her mother.

“Mom, I know you’re scared. You’re tired, you don’t understand, but we have to keep our heads. Just calm down. Listen, they will show us the way.” – Merida [00:55:39]

Merida was determined to think creatively in overcoming the obstacles that appeared for there is no one to depend on but herself. Thus, she had implied the motherhood role as a leader by
imitating Elinor’s quality. In fact, the queen acts as the decision maker in the kingdom practicing her wise and calm thinking of motherhood. Conducting Merida’s betrothal was one example of the Queen’s leadership, whereas the King had no say in it nor can he help to defend his daughter. The King’s stance was never clear but he was depicted to follow whatever the Queen desires on one hand, and support Merida’s dream on the other. This is very different compared to the other Disney Princesses movies, because them dominance of patriarchal values presented by the movies was shown clearly through the authority of the Kings and princes as the decision maker for kingdom matters. The shifted leadership supports Belenky’s notion of how mothers have the biggest influence upon a daughter’s character building (Belenky, 1986). According to the writer’s interpretation, Merida and Elinor’s leadership implies that there is a transformation in leadership by the leading nature of the female characters.

In *Tangled*, Rapunzel practices leadership quality by practicing women’s nature of love and nurturing, making her a great role model of a woman leader through the ability of maintaining the unity of her small crew. For the writer, her presence made a difference for even the cruelest pirates she encountered with at the Snuggly Duckling restaurant. Her open personality shone among others as she successfully arbitrate Flynn and Maximus (which is still under duty to catch Flynn) and also create a peaceful atmosphere in the most thrilling moment of the story where Flynn was about to be bullied by the pirates of Snuggly Duckling.

“Hey! Leave him alone! Put him down! Okay, I don’t know where I am, but I need him to be my guide to see the lanterns, because I’ve been dreaming about them my entire life. Find your humanity! Haven’t any of you ever had a dream?” – Rapunzel [00:38;41]

Rapunzel’s vocal attitude as the director and peacemaker of the adventure bears the male characters’ appreciation and acceptance towards her proposals which is simply conducted by
compassion. Rapunzel didn’t think about her own ambition and safety. Rather, she showed her concern on everybody’s dream and encourages them to pursue it. Wilson also supports this by suggesting that “Without the leadership of women, nothing would change for women—or men. It was an audacious, ambitious prospect, driven by duty and conviction. Women who have the courage will bring a change,” (Wilson, 2004, p.72). Men listen to her, and that’s how a reliable leader earns her respect. Moreover, acting as the director, Rapunzel was able to direct the former thief, Flynn, to become an honest and responsible citizen leading him the right path. Flynn was reluctant to deny or reject Rapunzel’s directing him, since Rapunzel had performed an engaging way of negotiating and understanding. Rapunzel showed her concern on Flynn’s life and became a supportive and excellent listener. In the end, Flynn left his life as a thief, came clean about his crime and sincerely helped Rapunzel by giving up the crown to his ex-brothers in crime.

“Anyhow, I just wanted to say, I shouldn’t have split. The crown is all yours, I’ll miss you, but this is for our own good.” –Flynn [01:14:43]

Moreover, in being a leader, Rapunzel’s compassion of her allies directs her to always accommodate their needs and security. This quality makes her the ‘protector’ along the journey, which breaks Storkey’s findings of the existence men’s stereotype as the leader and protector. Rapunzel cherishes her friendship and relation with everyone involved in the story. Facing danger for many times with only a little knowledge about the world, her small body, and the fact that she is a female didn’t stop Rapunzel’s humanity to shine among others. It is proven through what she had done to the pirates in the Snugly Duckling, turning them from enemies to allies, by showing her concern on their dreams. Secondly, with the consent of the power she posses, she constantly helped Flynn whenever he is wounded. Rapunzel’s magic spell of her healing power carries her compassionate nature as a leader.
“Heal what has been hurt / change the fates / save what once was mine / what once was mine” – Rapunzel, “The Tear Heals” by Mandy Moore (2010)

The shifted gender roles in leadership presented by Rapunzel and Merida gives the new breeze of emancipation in fairytale. Their leadership creates a big distinction with the dependant stereotype of damsels in distress because their contribution in leading others through their compassionate and affiliative nature proves that woman leaders are more than capable in doing so. The outcome of their leadership is also significant in the way their allies appreciate their contribution in creating a change for betterment. Thus their male allies learnt how to find their way to embrace humanity. Merida and Rapunzel’s qualities supports Wilson’s notion about women bringing a change generated by their caring and nurturing nature.

4.3. Responsibility

As princesses, both Merida and Rapunzel hold double responsibilities, which are the responsibility as a daughter and the responsibility to achieve their goals in life. Being responsible means “having the duty to take care of something or someone” (Merriam-Webster’s Dictionary). In Brave and Tangled’s case, responsibility means how the princesses are able to show their consistency in their decision to pursue their dreams which involves other people. Two things that a woman warrior should have as a parameter of responsibility are commitment and a great deal of contribution deployed to achieve their aim. In Jongeward’s book Women As Winners, in the section of her study on women’s levels of awareness, she discovered that the ability of women to picture clearly in their minds what it was they wanted or wanted to do undoubtedly facilitated their directing their activities in way to get what they wanted (Jongeward, 1977.p.278). This is how Merida and Rapunzel had acknowledged their responsibility as woman warriors and
committed to fulfill it. Overall, it’s all about how they are responsible to find the justification of their decision in reaching a *win-win solution* for everyone

“I’m the princess, I’m the example! I’ve got duties, responsibilities, expectations. My whole life is planned out! Preparing for the day I’d become, well, my mom” – Merida

[00;05;30]

In Brave, Merida shows her responsibility by attending some kind of homeschooling Elinor modulates for her in order to prepare Merida in becoming a compatible future queen. Given an organized schedule of schooling and a day off in each week, Merida had proven to be responsible in her time management. The writer indicates that Merdia was fully aware that she had the obligation to try her best in fulfilling the standard that the Queen has set for her. And as a free-spirited youth, Merida spent her one day off wisely to explore her archery talent and rove the nature.

“Fate be changed look inside, mend the bond torn by pride” – Witch

[00;47;51]

Another complication in the story which requires Merida’s responsibility is how she can repair her broken bond with Elinor as the result of her immature behavior. Here, Merida denoted her commitment by deploying all her time, energy and thoughts to fight against all odds until she can figure out the witch’s riddle and mend the bond. Developmentalists Baruch, Barnett & Rivers (1983), Chodorow (1978) and Gilligan (1982) had also revealed on their findings that:

“Several writers on women have proposed that women develop their identities not by breaking away from their relationship with other people but through their **responsibility** and attachment that characterize such ties” (Papallia, 1976,p.453)
Merida faced so many tests during her adventure. First, the witch’s hut disappeared, and by the help of the wisps they found the conjured hut. Secondly, they were led to Mor’du’s legendary kingdom and had to survive from his attack. Then, with so many difficulties, Merida and the Queen had to get the tapestry that Merida torn on the day she left the kingdom to find the witch. The tapestry has a picture of the royal family embroidered on it by Elinor, and it was torn by Merida with a sword, separating her picture with the rest of the family. This is one of the attempts to break the spell. Unfortunately, mending the tapestry by covering it upon the Queen’s body during the rise of the second sunrise didn’t work. In the end, as stated in the Compassion section, the spell was broken as both Merida and Elinor realize what they have done wrong to each other. As they embraced their love for one another, the spell was broken. Failures never hampered Merida’s strong-willingness and commitment in completing her journey.

“You’ve always been there for me, you’ve never given up on me. I just want you back. I love you” – Merida [1:17:53]

“I’ve been selfish, I tore a big rift in our kingdom, there’s no one to blame but me. And I know that I need to mend my mistake and mend our bond.” – Merida [00:47:51]

Merida’s compassion towards her mother drove her to take responsibility and to even sacrifice herself for her mother’s sake. Here, the writer indicates that there is an act of imitation, highlighting on how Elinor had bestowed her compassionate nature through her motherly way of loving. Merida responsibility includes absentmindedly throwing herself in front of her father’s sword to protect Elinor from being killed. Merida learned, felt and copied the quality of compassion through her repertoire of Elinor’s love. Josselson proclaimed how parenting is inseparable with the child’s psychological growth in their preadolescence development. The magic that broke the spell was a simple “I love you” that comes from the bottom of Merida’s
heart. The message implied had vividly shown that ‘love’ has the power to save a life and create a big change for others.

In the end of the day, after witnessing her daughter’s responsibility, Elinor’s heart then melted. Merida’s contribution and commitment made her earn the freedom she had longed for. The act of compassionate responsibility is also supported by Lyons (1983) theory, suggesting that “people who experience the self as predominantly connected tend to espouse morality based on care” and also “in the intellectual domain, our caring represents a quest for understanding” (Belenky, 1986,p.102). Compassion allows Merida and the Queen to picture their selves in one another’s shoes. They learned how to understand what it would be like if they switch positions and should fulfill each other’s demand as a mother and daughter. Thus, Merida had played another noble role as the representative of the four clan’s young generation, proposing:

“I’ve decided to do what’s right, and...break tradition. My mother the queen, feels in her heart that we be free...to write our own story, follow our hearts and find love in our own time. The queen and I put the decision to you, my lords. Might our young people decide for themselves who they will love?” – Merida [01:04;27]

On her own behalf, the princes’ and also the Queen’s, Merida’s voice gained appraisal for ringing the wakeup call for the new liberated generation in embracing their freedom. From then on, betrothals were abolished. This is another example of Kohlberg’s Universal Principle, appointing to how Merida initiatively creates a democratic atmosphere for all clans in dispute.

“7 A.M., the usual morning lineup / Start on the chores and sweep ‘til the floor’s all clean / Polish and wax do laundry, and mop and shine up / sweep again and by then it’s like 7.15 / And so I’ll read a book or maybe two or three / I’ll add a few new paintings to
my gallery / I’ll play guitar and knit / and cook and basically / Just wonder when will my life begin? “- Rapunzel / Song by Mandy Moore “When Will My Life Begin?” (2010)

In Tangled, as a daughter, Rapunzel had shown her responsibility in becoming an obedient daughter to a wicked woman for 18 years, by fulfilling her duties in the household. However, according to Rapunzel, living her daily routine soaked in the same house chores every single day isn’t living her life yet. The writer would like to highlight what is more worth discussing, which is Rapunzel’s responsibility in actualizing her decision to follow her dream and find her true identity. Rapunzel left the selfish responsibility given by Gothel behind. Rapunzel’s responsibility lies on the pursuit of her dreams and also her responsibility to her new family, those who encourage her to fulfill her dreams. Rapunzel embodies her commitment through her consistency in sticking to the ‘escaping the tower’ plan to follow her dreams. Moreover, her contribution in being a responsible woman warrior is visible through her passion in securing her crew’s wellbeing throughout the journey. Rapunzel and her crew faced so many obstacles along the journey, from the palace soldiers that chases after them, Flynn’s ex-brothers in crime that ran after the stolen crown, until the friendship tests which jeopardizes her relationship with Flynn coming from the wicked pitting act of Gothel.

Appointing to Jongewards’ finding about women and their ambition stated earlier, Rapunzel was able to show her responsibility throughout her journey to find the lanterns. First, Rapunzel saved Flynn from being reported by the pirates in the Snugly Duckling. Secondly, with her power she rescued Flynn and Pascal from drowning in the dark flooded tunnel. Thirdly, she was responsible for keeping her words where in the end of the adventure, she returned what Flynn had stolen from the castle to him as the part of the deal. And the last yet most noble contribution that Rapunzel did as a part being a woman warrior is sacrifice. The moment when Flynn was
stabbed -as Gothel’s reaction to Rapunzel’s rejection to stay with her- Rapunzel offered Gothel her freedom in change of Flynn’s life. She felt obligated and was willing to sacrifice her one and only dream for Flynn because for Rapunzel, the friendship and love she had for Flynn is worth everything in the world.

“...but if you let me save him, I will go with you. I'll never run, I'll never escape, just let me heal him. You and I will be together, forever. Just like the way you want, I promise” – Rapunzel [01:23:07]

Flynn had cut Rapunzel’s extremely long hair short right after Gothel agreed to Rapunzel’s condition. He insisted that he doesn’t want to be saved if ever Rapunzel had to be trapped in the tower again. Flynn wanted to make sure that even when he dies, Rapunzel never be enslaved again by Gothel, since he knew that Rapunzel’s hair is the only treasure Gothel wants. Overall, Rapunzel was responsible for all of her decision, mending her relationship with Flynn and everyone she cared for. Her contribution and commitment to fulfill her dream led her to the truth that she is the lost princess.

As the French tragedian Pierre Corneille (1606-1684) had promulgated his famed “man of courage is a man of his words” quote, Merida and Rapunzel had taken over the ‘promise keeper’ role as “woman of her words” with their commitment and peacemaking nature. The ‘happily ever after’ ending for both movies were attained as a reward to the princesses’ struggle of woman-warriors in bearing a win-win solution for every single person in the story. Based on the writer’s interpretation of both movies, the responsibility value teaches a great lesson to never runaway from problems. Secondly, failure should never discourage women from fulfilling their duties as daughters, liberated women in the society, and our agent of change role as the young generation. The presences of failures are to make women act maturely in facing obstacles and
life problems so they can evaluate and introspect the flaws. The chances Disney Princesses have to even experience failure is absent, regarding their passive stereotype as the *damsel in distress*. Their passiveness makes them lack of struggle and awareness that they can actually contribute something for societal betterment with their minds and power.

5. Conclusion

The gender stereotype has been deeply rooted in the society that affects the development of oppressed people especially women. The perpetuation of patriarchal stereotype can be found in every day context through various media one of which is fairytale. The observation and comparison between movies regarding the Disney Princesses and the ‘new princesses’ show that there is a significant effort to transform the stereotype of *damsel in distress* princesses to *woman warriors*. The analysis of the two selected movies *Brave* and *Tangled* using the feminist criticism had proven that there are a number of shifted values by the emancipating characteristics of Merida and Rapunzel, which backlashes the values of Disney Princesses’ *damsel in distress*. Merida and Rapunzel’s characteristics and development teaches a valuable lesson that every daughter can enhance their brave, leading and responsible characteristic through their compassionate ‘inner-woman warrior’.

Suggestion

The values perpetuated through *Brave* and *Tangled* indicates that the two selected movies are more significant in educating and empowering women -in its nature of fiction- regarding the contextualized characteristics that are profoundly relevant to today’s culture and beliefs. The writer suggest that for further research, scholars who are interested in fairytales can conduct research related to women empowerment through fairytale, so that fairytale’s educative function can be maximized to contribute betterment for women.
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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

First and above all, I’d like to give my gratitude to Jesus Christ, for guiding me through the whole process of completing my thesis. I’d like to show my biggest appreciation to my beloved supervisor, Bu Suzana Maria for the assistance, advices, and overall providing her time to help me become the writer I am today. Furthermore, I’d like to thank my second reader Bu Purwanti Kusumaningtyas who inspired me the most about literature throughout my study in ED. I treasure every lesson that Bu Suzan and Bu Pur had bestowed to me upon my learning experience in ED and I promise to contribute my literary skills for further studies and education development in Indonesia. Also, I’d like to thank my family: Mom, Dad, Debo, Adel and Om Taka, and the big family of the Sutiyonos and Nuhamaras for always being there for me and for the relentless love, prayers, consolation and support through my struggle. I cherish my friendship with my brothers and sisters in arms: Ferile, Jennifer, Grace, Dian, Anita W., Anita D.S., Krisma, Bima, Raras, Michael, and the big family of Niners. Together, we fought for our studies in ED, and this thesis means nothing without their presence and support in my life. Next, I’d like to show a big gratitude to my church family, the English Service Committee of GKI Salatiga: Sita, Tia, Melly, Bu Martha N, who always remember me in their prayers. Last but not least my thanks go to the EDS members for giving me the best experience in debating and for supporting me in completing my thesis.