REJ Regular Journal

TITLE:	Merveilles & contes, Marvels & tales = Wur Märchen = Maravillas & cuentos = Meravigli racconti, electronic resource
VOLUME/ISSUE/PAG	10 / 1 69-85
DATE:	1996
AUTHOR OF	Graff, Amy
TITLE OF	From Glass Slipper to Glass Ceiling: 'Cinc and the Endurance of a Fairy Tale
ISSN:	0898-154X
OTHER	OCLC: 615957416
CALL NUMBER:	http://rapidill.org/redir.ashx?id=OTMwNTA4
DELIVERY:	Ariel: 129.82.28.195
REPLY:	Mail:

FROM GLASS SLIPPER TO GLASS CEILING: "CINDERELLA" AND THE ENDURANCE OF A FAIRY TALE

Amy deGraff

As scholars, we are fully aware that the Cinderella story has enchanted readers for many centuries and in many lands. In America the appeal of this tale has been particularly strong. New editions of "Cinderella" appear with regularity each year, and motifs from the tale can be found in all aspects of American popular culture, from rap songs to cartoons, from TV programs to films.[1]

The 1988 film *Working Girl* is one of the most elaborate and interesting reworkings of the Cinderella story to appear in recent years. The film's parallels with the traditional tale, both in terms of its narrative pattern as well as the emotional satisfaction it provides, are extensive and seemingly intentional. The film parts company with the fairy tale, however, with respect to the way the happy ending is realized, thereby sending a very different message as to how women can achieve power and status.

This study will look closely at both the similarities and the differences between film and fairy tale. In the process I hope to show the great appeal and adaptability of the Cinderella story and, ultimately, how this tale in particular and fairy tales in general can continue to provide cultural paradigms for modern readers.

When *Working Girl* (directed by Mike Nichols, screenplay by Kevin Wade)[2] first appeared, it not only charmed the critics but was also an immediate box office success. And its popularity has continued, as evidenced by its yearly television reruns. I would submit that, in part, the great appeal of this delightful film can be explained by the fact that at its core *Working Girl*

is indeed is a Cinderella story, albeit updated and with a modern twist.

Film reviews of *Working Girl* suggest that several critics quickly discerned a relationship between the film and the fairy tale. Tom O'Brian, for example, in his review of the film for *Commonweal* (48), calls it "a modest fairy tale via the Brothers Grimm and Frank Capra" and suggests the alternative title: "*Cinderella in an Alcott and Andrews Suit* (48)." Edith Kurzwell, in her discussion of *Working Girl* for *Partisan Review*, is more specific when she refers to the "formulaic nature of this modern Cinderella plot" (275). Although these critics have noted the parallels between the tale and the film, to date no one has pursued this comparison in any detail nor considered its implications.

A detailed analysis of *Working Girl* will show that although the film's context is modern and its plot much more complex than the fairy tale's, the basic elements of the Cinderella story are present.[3] *Working Girl*, like "Cinderella," offers a classic rags-to-riches fortune plot, except that in this version the heroine, Tess (played by Melanie Griffith), begins as a lowly, exploited secretary and ends up as a powerful executive. Like Cinderella she is oppressed by a wicked stepsister figure, Katherine (played by Sigourney Weaver), and she falls in love with a Prince Charming (played by Harrison Ford) who helps her rise from a lowly station to a position of status. There is even the equivalent of a ball where the heroine meets a Prince Charming who does not know her true identity, a flight to avoid discovery, and a modern-day version of a glass slipper. And, as is often the case with fairy tales, the good are rewarded in the end and the evil oppressor appropriately punished.

But let us take a closer look. On the surface, *Working Girl* tells the story of Tess, a young woman from a blue-collar neighborhood in Staten Island. Every day she takes the ferry to Manhattan to work as a low-level secretary for a Wall Street

brokerage firm. Her limited education and her social class have kept her in a subservient position. Tess wants more, however. And she deserves more because she is bright, imaginative, and intuitive. She has all the inner qualities necessary for success, but her efforts to move up in the business world are thwarted, first by male bosses who are interested only in sexually exploiting her and then by a female boss who wants to keep her in her place.

Tess is a modern Cinderella figure. She, too, is a servant, only she works in the household of the corporate world. Like Cinderella, she must wait on superiors who exploit her and do not want to see her succeed. Even the dirt and ash of the hearth cinders, which speak of Cinderella's degradation, have their symbolic corollaries in this film. Early in the story we see Tess being told to bring toilet paper to her boss who is in the men's room. While Stanley Kauffmann in his review of *Working Girl* for the *New Republic* (28) considers this scene "distasteful," the scene can be explained, indeed, is even called for by the fairy tale paradigm. The degradation of Tess brings to mind that of Cinderella, making very clear her lowly status.

The cinder image is suggested again a short time later when we see Tess covered with mud. Tess's bosses, who know how much she wants to get ahead, tell her they have arranged an interview with a senior colleague. The "interview" turns out to be in the back seat of a limousine with a pornographic movie playing on the video screen. It is raining outside. When Tess, refusing to prostitute herself, jumps out of the car, she is splattered with mud. The image makes manifest that she is being treated like dirt, that she, too, is a "cindergirl."

The similarities with "Cinderella" are brought more clearly into focus when Tess takes a new job as secretary to a female boss, Katherine. Katherine is the wicked stepsister of this story. Just as Cinderella must wait on her stepsisters and do their bidding, Tess must wait hand and foot on her boss (both

literally and figuratively). As the director, Mike Nichols, himself, notes, "I realized while shooting *Working Girl* that more often than not, Melanie Griffith (Tess) was down and Sigourney Weaver (Katherine) was up, Melanie was on her knees and Sigourney was standing . . ." (Combs 78). Tess's subservient position vis-à-vis her boss intensifies and becomes even more apparent when Katherine returns from a ski trip during which she has broken her leg. Katherine orders Tess to carry her bags, help her undress, get her medicine, and run errand after errand. Thus, like Cinderella, Tess must step and fetch in order to do the bidding of a demanding female who has power over her. When Katherine throws Tess, who has both hands already laden with baggage, an enormous stuffed gorilla to carry as well, the image of Tess as a thoroughly exploited beast of burden is complete.

A poor young woman, oppressed and exploited by jealous, self-centered older sisters, is fundamental to the Cinderella story. A similar dynamic is clearly present in *Working Girl* in the relationship between Tess and her boss, Katherine. While Katherine is the primary persecutor, it is interesting to note that there is a second female figure, Ginnie, a friend of Katherine's, who also seeks to keep Tess in her place. Although her role is minor, the inclusion of a second oppressive female suggests that on some level the authors felt a need to remain true to the double nature of the wicked stepsisters found in the original tale. Still, it is Katherine who, being much more fully developed in her role, is truly akin to Cinderella's wicked stepsisters in every way.[4] She is vain, egocentric, jealous, calculating, and willing to perpetrate a fraud at any expense. As mentioned earlier, Katherine demands that Tess wait on her hand and foot and, more importantly, like Cinderella's stepsisters, Katherine will do anything to keep a fellow sister subjugated if it is in her own interest.

Although Katherine has promised sisterhood—she tells Tess she will help her get ahead—like Cinderella's sisters, she only wants to keep her underling in her place. Not only does she renege on her promise to recommend Tess for the firm's management training program, but she also steals her employee's precious idea and uses it to promote herself. (The significance of Tess's "idea" will be discussed below.) In some ways Katherine is more villainous than Cinderella's stepsisters. They, at least, do not ever feign concern for her well-being. In fact, they are openly quite hostile and exploitative. Katherine, on the other hand, holds out the promise of sisterhood to Tess, but she turns out to be a false sister.

Like Cinderella, Tess, too, will have the opportunity to go to a ball and meet a Prince Charming who does not know her real identity. How will Tess go to the ball as a princess of the corporate world instead of as its servant? When Katherine breaks her leg on a ski trip and is forced into a lengthy recuperation in Switzerland, she asks Tess to take care of various details both at her apartment and at the office. Tess ends up moving into her boss's apartment and eventually into her office. In the process of attending to Katherine's business correspondence, she discovers that Katherine has stolen her idea for a large merger. Quickly understanding the significance of the betrayal, Tess realizes that she can no longer depend on Katherine to help her get ahead. She concludes that she must take action for herself. However, in order to effect her plan, she will need the help of a successful trader at another brokerage firm who can help her get her deal off the ground. This turns out to be Jack Trainer (the Prince Charming of this tale). In order to make contact with him, Tess must disguise herself as a corporate princess and make her way to an elegant cocktail party. Her evening gown does not appear at the wave of a fairy godmother's wand, however. She finds it herself in her boss's closet.

The dress itself first suggests that the scene at the party can be viewed as a reworking of the ball scene in "Cinderella." Not the slim-fitting little black cocktail frock that one might expect at such an occasion, the dress Tess selects is reminiscent of a true ball gown. Although short, it has full sleeves, a full skirt, and a scoop neck. The rhinestones that sparkle against its dark velvet background complete its royal appearance, and the price tag of $6,000 hanging from the dress when Tess takes it from the closet assures us it is fit for a princess.

Although the opportunity for a blue-collar girl from Staten Island to go to a ball dressed like a princess of the corporate world incorporates an essential element of the fairy tale—in the world of the fairy tale the impossible can be possible—there is, nevertheless, an important difference in the film that should be noted. Where Cinderella must depend on an external agent—her fairy godmother—to transform her, Tess will be her own agent of transformation. It is she who finds the dress and finds her way to the ball on her own power.

This modern message of self-actualization is beautifully symbolized in a scene that seems uncalled for in terms of the plot but has a clear symbolic and poetic logic. Sometime before the evening of the "ball," Tess and a friend are standing in the hallway of Katherine's apartment looking at a crystal chandelier which is descending before them because Tess has pushed a button to lower it. Religious music is playing as the vast, magnificent light comes down. Her friend seems surprised that this resplendent chandelier can be put within their reach. But that is exactly the point. The image of a radiant light that can be made accessible contains an important spiritual message. By its shape and brilliance, the chandelier represents a kind of mandala, a symbol of the self's magnificent potential. Clearly, the possibility of self-realization is not beyond the heroine's power. She needs only to act for herself. And she will.

The events of the cocktail party resonate with and even parallel the ball scene in "Cinderella." Tess comes to the party disguised, meets her prince (Jack Trainer), and is forced to flee for fear of discovery. Like the prince in Cinderella, Trainer is tall, dark, handsome, and very charming. Although a little more flawed then his counterpart, still he is at the top of the social hierarchy. Like the prince, he, too, becomes enchanted with a beautiful women whose real identity and lowly status are unknown to him. And, like the prince, as soon as he sees the heroine, his attention is riveted upon her, and he can look at no one else.

In the ball scene in "Cinderella," the fear that all will be undone results in the hasty departure of the heroine, the leaving behind of an article of clothing, the prince's pursuit of the heroine, and her flight for fear of discovery. These same events are present (albeit reworked and modernized) in the party scene of the film. At the party, Tess becomes slightly inebriated and tells Jack Trainer (whom she has finally met) that she must leave. Tess's departure is further hastened by the arrival of one of Katherine's co-workers, who could easily disclose her true identity. Tess slips out, leaving her pocketbook behind. Trainer picks up the bag and runs after her. The hero's running down the steps in the dark after the fleeing maiden whose identity is still unknown to him completes the parallels with the ball scene in "Cinderella."

Although the pocketbook does not ultimately serve the function of the glass slipper, there is something in this film that does: Tess's idea. In the fairy tale, the person who can claim ownership of the shoe is the one who will marry the prince, achieve high status, and live happily ever after. This is why each stepsister tries to appropriate the slipper and wear it as her own. The shoe does not fit either of them, of course, and in the end, the sisters are shown to be impostors. In *Working Girl* these same elements are present, but with respect to a

creative idea rather than an article of clothing. (The significance of this change will be discussed below.) Allow me to describe in some detail what happens.

Although only a secretary, Tess keeps abreast of activities related to mergers and acquisitions of large corporations. Moreover, she has her own unique way of putting ideas together and coming up with some uncommon solutions. Thus, when she reads that Trask Industries, a large corporation, is faced with threats of takeover from foreign investors, she comes up with an idea for a merger that will save the company, an idea that no one has considered before. She shares her thinking with her boss, Katherine, in the belief that Katherine will bring the idea to the powers that be and thereby help Tess to get ahead. But Katherine appropriates Tess's idea and says it is her own, much as the wicked stepsisters claim that the glass slipper belongs to them. And again, like the stepsisters in the Grimm Brothers' tale, who manage to shove their feet into the slipper and ride off with the prince for a short moment before their subterfuge is discovered, Katherine, too, is momentarily successful in her fraud. Thus, in the movie, just as Tess and Jack are successfully orchestrating the acquisition of Metro-Media by Trask Industries, Katherine barges into the board room, reveals that Tess is just her secretary, and accuses Tess of stealing her idea to promote herself. Tess, powerless to defend herself, rushes out. Katherine proceeds to replace her in the negotiations and is momentarily victorious in her efforts to keep her status and to win the prince.

However, just as the glass slipper will not fit the stepsisters, much less any other maiden in the land, Tess's idea is unique to her and cannot, in the end, be appropriated by another. That she is the rightful owner, not Katherine, is revealed shortly thereafter in a scene containing the essential elements of the conclusion of the Cinderella story: discovery of the rightful

owner, revelation of the heroine's true worth, punishment of the evil perpetrator, winning of the prince, and rise in status.

Tess, who has been fired by Katherine, is about to leave the office building with her few possessions when she runs into Jack, Oran Trask (head of Trask Industries), and Katherine. They are on their way to complete negotiations on Tess's deal. Tess is dressed in shabby work clothes—a sweatshirt and jeans. Her elegant suit and coat of the week before have disappeared. The dream is over. After a magical week as a princess in the corporate world, she has returned to rags and to her former lowly place. The parallel to Cinderella's return to rags and servant status after her evening at the ball is clearly suggested.

At the elevator with Trask and Trainer, Tess has one brief moment of opportunity. Will she find a way to reveal the truth and prove that she is the rightful owner of the idea? (The suspense is similar to the fairy tale's.) She does. She shares with Trask the process which she led her to conceive of a merger between Trask Industries and Metro Media. When shortly thereafter Trask questions Katherine about how she came up with the idea for Trask to buy Metro, she has no answers. Suddenly, everyone can see that Katherine is the impostor and that the idea could only belong to Tess. The shoe is back on the right foot.

It is important to underscore that in both "Cinderella" and *Working Girl* the revelation scene takes place when the heroine is dressed in rags and that the significance of the revelation is the same for both stories. Ultimately, the social status of the heroine is not important to the prince. Worth comes from within. And it is for the heroine's inner worth, for something central to her being that has nothing to do with social class, that she is loved and chosen by her prince. The consolation the reader feels seeing true worth, not social class, recognized and rewarded is one of the great satisfactions of this fairy tale.

Just punishment of evil deeds is mandatory in the fairy tale and duly occurs in the film as well.[5] Thus, when Katherine's treachery is discovered, she is cursed, humiliated, and fired. Some critics have expressed concern at the way Katherine is treated at the end. Stanley Kauffmann, for example, in his review of *Working Girl* for *The New Republic* (28), found it very distasteful that "Weaver had to be transformed into a heavy." He notes that she "is packed off at the end with comments about her 'bony ass' that sound particularly unpleasant as supported by Griffith and Ford." Kauffmann is correct in his perception. Katherine does become "the heavy" both in the way she is characterized and the way she is punished. However, I would submit that this is neither a "distasteful" moment nor a sign of misogyny on the part of the director. It is absolutely called for by the conventions of the fairy tale genre.

First, in the fairy tale universe, punishments that seem excessive often have a symbolic logic. In the Grimms' "Cinderella," the wicked stepsisters have their eyes pecked out because they are guilty of a kind of spiritual blindness—a punishment, then, that fits their crime. In *Working Girl* Katherine's punishment also fits her crime. Being called "bony ass" by Trask, Trainer, and Tess clearly debases her. Is this not fitting for one who has degraded and dehumanized another?

Second, fairy tales are particularly heavy-handed when it comes to the representation of good and evil. Thus Katherine's loss of power and position and the utter contempt expressed toward her at the story's conclusion are appropriate here. She has been mean and selfish and has not exhibited one ounce of sisterhood. Like any evil character in this genre, she must be punished; justice must be served. The fairy tale is a black and white world. Good and evil are polarities.[6] There is no room for ambiguity, no way we can understand and forgive Katherine. She is the heavy because the fairy tale deems it so.

Up to this point, our discussion of *Working Girl* has tried to establish the many similarities in plot and motif between the film and the fairy tale. The film does part company, however, with the traditional tale, offering a very different conception of the happy ending. In the fairy tale, marriage to the prince enables Cinderella to achieve adulthood, status, and power. Tess, too, wins her Prince Charming and a relationship which looks as if it will last "happily ever after." Nonetheless, for Tess the story does not end here. The prince can only be a part of the modern happy ending, not its sole source. Although there is a cozy scene where we see Tess and Jack in the kitchen at breakfast time, this is not the conclusion. In a nice role reversal, Jack is actually packing Tess's lunch box and seeing her off to work. The true happy ending comes a few scenes later. Tess arrives at her new job and discovers not only that is she no longer a secretary, but also that she has been given an executive position with her own office and her own secretary. She has broken through the glass ceiling.[7]

The last shots of the film pan back away from Tess to reveal that her office is high up in a Wall Street skyscraper that reaches into the clouds. The symbolism is clear. Tess is on her way up. She has made it out of the servant class, and she has accomplished this not because she found Prince Charming (although certainly he helped her on her way), but because she was smart and resourceful. Self-realization was not accomplished through another, but through the heroine herself. The magic was within.

The message of *Working Girl* is clearly very different, then, from that of the traditional Cinderella tale. In the traditional tale, success could only be realized with the help of magical agents and rescue by a prince. The waiting, pining Cinderella would never have been able to attend the ball without the assistance of her fairy godmother. Certainly, she could never have escaped her servitude and attained a position of rank had

she not been pursued and rescued by the prince and then married to him. In *Working Girl*, however, the heroine is not in need of rescue. While Jack Trainer may support Tess in her efforts to succeed, it is Tess who possesses the intelligence and vision to get there. She has her own plan for realizing her dreams, and she is willing to take risks to do so. As mentioned earlier, she finds her own ball gown, or to put it another way, she discovers her own means of gaining entrée into a world that would otherwise shun her as an inferior. Through some inventive and unconventional methods, she succeeds in bringing two corporate presidents to the negotiating table for a multi-million dollar merger. In this modern-day Cinderella tale, no magical helpers propel this heroine forward. It is Tess's own burning desire which starts her on her journey, and her own rich inner resources which bring that journey to its marvelous conclusion. Additionally, in the traditional tale, status and fulfillment are tied to marriage. As indicated earlier, although her relationship with Trainer is important, clearly marriage is neither the goal nor the means to the heroine's self-actualization. Personal success is defined in professional, not matrimonial, terms.

It is interesting to note in this context the importance of the shift from glass slipper to creative idea as emblem of identity. In the traditional tale the glass slipper and small foot functioned to identify the rightful heroine. The symbolism of the slipper is significant in terms of the values it embodies. As the quintessential symbol of a certain kind of feminine ideal, the small glass slipper suggests elegance, daintiness and fragility. The notion of fragility leads to another, that of dependency. Only the girl who possesses these qualities will be rewarded at the end.[8]

One could go still further, as does folklorist R.D. Jameson, and suggest that on another level the small slipper has a sexual connotation as well.[9] If so, then the prince's choice of a girl

who can wear the tiny shoe suggests that Cinderella's value is linked and perhaps even limited to her sexuality. The fact that the authors of *Working Girl* chose to use a "creative idea" as an emblem of identity for their heroine sends a wonderful new message about women's powers and capabilities. Intelligence, intuition, and creative energy, not sex appeal, make one worthy of success.[10]

At this point one could wonder to what degree the authors were aware that they were making extensive use of the narrative pattern of the Cinderella story? Is the tale is so pervasive in our culture that it would simply enter into the creative process when there is a certain kind of rags-to-riches story to tell, one which would speak to our deepest hopes and dreams for recognition, status and reward? Or did the authors realize that they could make their message of female self-actualization more powerful and more appealing by using the pattern of the traditional tale and then replacing the values it extols with new ones more appropriate for modern women? Certainly, this would not be the first time that a variant of "Cinderella" has been written or told. In fact, talking about fairy tales nearly always includes talking about versions, and this in itself tells us something important about their fundamental nature: fairy tales have the capacity to carry the norms and values of different ages, to be reworked and imbued with new meanings, while remaining essentially recognizable. Thus they can serve as cultural paradigms to aid in a culture's adaptation to new circumstances. Herein lies an explanation of the genre's magic, power, and endurance.

Postscript

I would like to add a final thought. It seems to me that as scholars in search of fairy tale variants, we should turn our attention to films. Film has become a powerful medium for the retelling or reworking of the stories of old, as I hope I have proven in this discussion of *Working Girl*. And perhaps, too, the experience of going to the movie theater bears some resemblance to the *veillées* of earlier times. Although strangers, we come together in a common space; when the lights go down, we sit in darkness, separated for a time from the activities of the day. Our attention is riveted to the performance, and the magic of a story connects us all—once upon a time, again.

NOTES

1. To see how much "Cinderella" has captivated the hearts of even the most unlikely people, one has only to look at the edition of this tale recently created by the American photographer William Wegman. In Wegman's version, Weimaraner dogs are photographed in the roles of all the story's protagonists (see Wegman).

It is also interesting to note that Professor Alan Peck of the University of Rochester is compiling a bibliography which will include an extensive list of popular-culture versions of "Cinderella. " This should prove most useful to scholars in the field (see Mooney).

2. Throughout this paper I will refer to both Mike Nichols and Kevin Wade as the "authors." When it comes to the medium of film, it becomes difficult, if not impossible, to separate the writing of the screen play from the work of the director in the realization of the final product.

3. The authors have for the most part based their story on the Disney version of Cinderella (1979), which itself imitates Charles Perrault's "Cinderella, or the Little Glass Slipper." The Perrault/Disney Cinderella story seems to have become the paradigm for modern American audiences. (One might go further, as does Huang Mei in *Transforming the Cinderella Dream: From Frances Burne to Charlotte Bronte*, when she states that Perrault "gave the story the form in which it is known throughout the world today" [2]).

4. There is no step-mother figure in *Working Girl*. This does not invalidate our reading of this film as a Cinderella story because, in some

ways, Katherine seems to be the stepmother and the stepsisters all rolled into one. Cinderella's stepmother is much more calculating and powerful than her daughters. Thus, in terms of the force of her character, Katherine bears a greater resemblance to her than to the stepsisters. However, to the degree that all three characters—stepmother and stepsisters—serve the same function of persecuting the heroine and keeping her in a subservient position, a stepmother is not necessary to the plot. One highly effective persecutor will do.

5. Although in terms of the overall plot, the film's authors have followed the Disney/Perrault versions fairly closely, with respect to the issue of retribution for the evil wrongdoer, however, they have come closer to the Grimms' version and to the pattern followed by fairy tales generally. In Perrault, Cinderella forgives the wicked stepsisters, generously brings them with her to the prince's palace, and immediately marries them off to two noblemen of the court. In the Grimms' version, the stepsisters have their eyes pecked out by birds. In the former, Christian forgiveness reigns, in the latter retribution.

6. See Luthi 94-95.

7. Jack Zipes, the famed fairy tale critic, has made the case that issues of exploitation and class conflict are at the heart of many folk and fairy tales, and that these tales contain wish fulfillment fantasies of the powerless poor who dream of replacing their aristocratic oppressors (20-40). Beyond its feminist message, which is discussed in the body of this paper, the film also clearly contains a wish fulfillment fantasy of the kind discerned by Zipes in other tales. Tess breaks through the glass ceiling of class prejudice that has diminished her value and her chances for success, and certainly one of the great satisfactions in this film is seeing Tess, the uneducated, blue-collar secretary from Staten Island, emerge victorious over her Park Avenue, Ivy League-educated boss.

One even finds in the film the utopian message that Jack Zipes sees in some fairy tales whereby democratic ideals replace concepts of power and privilege (30). Thus at the end, when Tess discovers that she has her own secretary, instead of treating her as an underling over whom she can lord her new-found power, Tess makes it very clear that her secretary will not be exploited, but rather treated with respect and humanity.

8. It is worth noting that recognition by means of a small shoe and the importance of a tiny foot as emblem of female perfection, with their corresponding emphasis on fragility and dependency, may have their origin in the earliest known version of the "Cinderella" tale, a ninth-century Chinese tale entitled "Sheh Hsien." As Huang Mei says in her book *Transforming the Cinderella Dream: From Frances Burney to Charlotte*

Bronte in China, "a pair of perfectly bound small feet became the symbol of fragile feminine beauty, as well as the highest female virtue—for it marked the woman's obedience to the existing order and promised her future dependence on man" (4).

9. See Jameson 87-89. Jameson describes the shoe as "an intimate and potent symbol" (88) and goes on to say that "the shoe here [in "Cinderella"] is the symbol of the fruitful female organ itself" (89). See also Bettelheim 269-70.

10. Although certainly the message in this "Cinderella" is a feminist one, it should be noted that the prince is not excluded as a source of fulfillment. Unlike a number of modern reworkings of fairy tales, where the prince is ridiculed and even dismissed as unnecessary, *Working Girl* presents a more balanced picture. Thus, while Tess's success in the workplace results directly from her intelligence and intuitiveness (Jack Trainer assists her, but the ideas and strategies are hers), clearly a full life includes, as well, a loving and sexual relationship with her prince.

Film Note: *Working Girl.* ©1988. Twentieth Century Fox Film Corp., United States. Directed by Mike Nichols. Produced by Douglas Wick. Written by Kevin Wade. Directory of photography Michael Ballhaus. Music by Carly Simon. Actors: Melanie Griffith (Tess McGill), Harrison Ford (Jack Trainer), Sigourney Weaver (Katharine Parker), Alec Baldwin (Mike Dugan), Joan Cusack (Cyn). Summary: Romantic comedy set in the New York office world. Tess McGill (played by Melanie Griffith), a struggling secretary, is working her way to the top, in spite of her manipualtive boss Katharine Parker (played by Sigourney Weaver as a powerful parodic character). Tess, the underdog secretary, gets her unexpected chance to shine by showing her business talent and good looks when she replaces her boss, temporarily incapacitated by a broken leg. She also triumphs in a love situation. It is a sort of 1980 Cinderella Manhattan romance. [Credit: Leonard Maltin, *Movie and Video Guide* (New York: Signet, 1996)]

WORKS CONSULTED

Bettelheim, Bruno. *The Uses of Enchantment: The Meaning and Importance of Fairy Tales.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1976.

Combs, Richard. "Slaves of Manhattan; Mike Nichols on an Immigrants Dream." *Sight and Sound* 58.2 (1989):78.

Jameson, R.D. "Cinderella in China." *Cinderella: A Casebook.* Ed. Alan Dundes. Madison, Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1988.

Kauffmann, Stanley. "Stanley Kauffmann on Films: Job Openings." *The New Republic* 200.5 (1989): 28.

Kurzwell, Edith. "Going to the Movies." *Partisan Review* 56.2 (1989):275.

Luthi, Max. *The Fairy Tale as Art Form and Portrait of Man*. Transl. Jon Erickson. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984.

Mei, Huang. *Transforming the Cinderella Dream: From France Burney to Charlotte Bronte*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1990.

Mooney, Carolyn J. "An English Professor's Love Affair with Cinderella." *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (July 21, 1993): A5.

O'Brian, Tom. "Unlikely Servants: Working Girl and Rain Man." *Commonweal* 116.2 (1989): 48.

Wegman, William. *Cinderella*. New York: Hyperion Books for Children, 1993.

Zipes, Jack. *Breaking the Magic Spell: Radical Theories of Folk and Fairy Tales*. New York: Methuen Press, 1979.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Amy deGraff is Associate Professor of French and Chair of Romance Languages at Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Virginia. She is the author of *The Tower and the Well: A Psychological Interpretation of the Fairy Tales of Mme d'Aulnoy* (Summa, 1979).