

*Moulding the Female Body in Victorian Fairy Tales and Sensation Novels* by Laurence Talairach-Vielmas. Aldershot, Hants, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007. viii, 188 pp. + 6 b/w illus. ISBN 978-0-7546-6034-7. \$99.95; £50.00.

*The Fairy Tales of Oscar Wilde* by Jarlath Killeen. Aldershot, Hants, and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007. viii, 194 pp. ISBN 978-0-7546-5813-9. \$99.95; £50.00.

Fairy tales and mythology held a certain fascination for the Pre-Raphaelite circle. Christina Rossetti and William Morris both wrote fairy tales, as did John Ruskin, whose criticisms helped shape the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood's ideals. The connection between the Pre-Raphaelites and fairy tales is also evident in the work of prominent figures such as Arthur Hughes and Ford Madox Ford. The critical study of fairy tales has recently gained in popularity as scholars examine the wide-ranging impact that these seemingly insignificant stories had on Victorian culture and the ways in which such narratives reflect its social and political tensions. Laurence Talairach-Vielmas's *Moulding the Female Body* and Jarlath Killeen's *The Fairy Tales of Oscar Wilde* offer provocative re-readings of Victorian fairy tales and suggest that changes brought about by industrialization and religion are integrally connected with the aesthetics and literature of the period.

*Moulding the Female Body* analyses the relationship between the "prescriptive femininity" of fairy tales and the tensions they registered on women's bodies in sensation fiction. Examining the works of fantasists and sensation novelists such as Juliana Ewing and Wilkie Collins, Talairach-Vielmas offers close readings that highlight the interaction between the female body, its aestheticization, and mass consumption. The study begins by investigating ways in which mid-Victorian fairy tales were exploring female appetites and expression of the body through consumption. Talairach-Vielmas observes the relationship between fairy-tale traditions and female storytellers in her chapter on Jean Ingelow's *Mopsa the Fairy* (1869). Using Dante Rossetti's *The Maids of Elfen-Mere* (1855) to illustrate the dichotomous relationship between listener and teller, male and female, she argues that despite their attempts to write their own tales, women remained victims of the patriarchal system because "the spells they cast on listeners ... incarcerate[d] the tellers in their turn." This binding of women to textual representation is a theme she carries throughout the volume. Her analysis of George MacDonald's *The Light Princess* (1864) looks at the angel-woman ideal, which Talairach-Vielmas claims is attained by suppressing sexual and behavioural appetites. In the 1860s, medical advances re-established women's associations with fertility,