

## Scripting Love in Fairy Tales by Seventeenth-century French Women Writers

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### *Introduction*

Fairy tales are often read as timeless sources of wisdom with a universal appeal that transcends the time and place of their creation. The history of the genre is dominated by interpretation of fairy tales as transcriptions of oral stories inherited from popular folklore tales featuring beautiful princesses, handsome princes and powerful fairies.<sup>1</sup> As Elizabeth Wanning Harries observes, the canon established by this classic or “compact” model of fairy tales is based on tales by Charles Perrault and the Brothers Grimm.<sup>2</sup> The generic boundaries established by this narrow definition of the genre excludes the tales written by French women at the end of the seventeenth century. The *contes de fées* created by Marie-Catherine Le Jumel de Barneville, baronne d’Aulnoy (c. 1650/51–1705), Marie-Jeanne Lhéritier de Villandon (1664–1734), Catherine Bernard (c. 1663–1712), Henriette-Julie de Castelnau, comtesse de Murat (c. 1668–1716), Charlotte-Rose de Caumont de La Force (c. 1650–1724), Catherine Durand (Bédacier) (c. 1650–c. 1715) and Louise de Bossigny, comtesse d’Auneuil (?–c. 1700), whom I refer to collectively as the *conteuses*, are not simple or timeless.<sup>3</sup> They are “complex”, intertextual literary tales written for the sophisticated adult audience of the seventeenth-century literary salon.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Walter Benjamin’s 1936 essay is an influential example: “The Storyteller,” 83–109.

<sup>2</sup> Harries, *Twice Upon a Time*, 3–18.

<sup>3</sup> In French it is customary to refer to seventeenth-century women authors by their title: Madame d’Aulnoy, Mademoiselle Lhéritier, Mademoiselle Bernard, Madame Murat, Mademoiselle de La Force, Madame Durand, and Madame d’Auneuil. This article adopts the English custom of referring to male and female authors by their surname.

<sup>4</sup> Harries, *Twice Upon a Time*, 16–18.

Between 1690 and 1709, more than one hundred *contes de fées* were published by French authors, two-thirds of which were produced by the *conteuses*. Many of the conventions we recognize as stereotypical features of the fairy tale genre, such as the marriage closure and happily ever after ending, were inaugurated in this period. Despite the *conteuses'* contribution to the establishment of the genre, tales by Perrault, namely Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty and Little Red Riding Hood, are the most well-known fairy tales from this period. Perhaps one of the reasons for this is the lack of verifiable biographical information about the *conteuses'* lives. As compared to the extensive documentation about Perrault, information about the *conteuses* is elusive. Their tales are the most tangible trace of their existence.

Love is the most important theme in the *conteuses'* tales but their heroines do not always find love with a handsome prince and live happily ever after.<sup>5</sup> As Lewis C. Seifert has observed, their tales question the idealization of love as the ultimate fairy tale happy ending even as they contribute to the establishment of the conventional marriage closure.<sup>6</sup> This pattern is particularly evident in d'Aulnoy's twenty-five and Murat's fourteen tales, which alternatively idealize love as a perfect union and question whether virtuous lovers can obtain a happy ending outside of a fairy-tale setting. Bernard's two tales are marked by a profound pessimism about love and marriage as inevitable sources of suffering for women.<sup>7</sup> Durand and d'Auneuil recognize the positive and negative effects of love in their corpus of three and six tales, respectively. All the heroic couples in La Force's eight tales fall in love at first sight and her tales end with a celebration of their union. Love plays a less important role in Lhéritier's five tales; her heroines use their virtue and education to exercise a degree of control over their emotions.<sup>8</sup>

Differences in the *conteuses'* representation of love mean that their corpus of tales present love as a multifaceted emotion that is not simply a necessary narrative element in the journey towards marriage. Each author develops her own perspective on love and I argue that these perspectives provide evidence of the formation of an emotional community engaged in a conversation about the effects of love on the lives of early modern women. The system of feeling underpinning this community was a theory of emotion based on the agency of the heart as the source of human desire for love. Their conversations about love drew on a shared vocabulary of emotion to represent love as a tender, turbulent passion and a social negotiation of gender politics. The presence of these different theories of emotion reflects the three-phase shift in seventeenth-century French emotions discourse identified by Joan DeJean.<sup>9</sup>

Recent fairy-tale scholarship has illustrated the need to revise the fairy tale canon to include the *conteuses'* tales. This work emphasizes the subversive nature of the *conteuses'* *oeuvre* as a female literary genre that critiqued patriarchal norms of gender and sexuality in seventeenth-century France.<sup>10</sup> This article contributes to efforts to revise the fairy tale canon by examining the *conteuses'* tales as cultural artefacts that provide historical evidence about the society in which they were told, retold and written down.<sup>11</sup> In seeking to emphasize the historical significance of the *conteuses'* tales, I seek to draw a distinction between universal

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<sup>5</sup> Many different types of love appear in the *conteuses'* tales. I focus on the representation of courtly or romantic love because it is the type that appears most frequently in the *conteuses'* tales. It is also the dominant form of love associated with the fairy tale genre.

<sup>6</sup> Seifert, "On Fairy Tales, Subversion, and Ambiguity," 53–71.

<sup>7</sup> I discuss these tales further in Reddan, "Losing Love, Losing Hope."

<sup>8</sup> A list of the *conteuses'* tales is included as an appendix to this article.

<sup>9</sup> DeJean, *Ancients against Moderns*, 78–88. See the discussion below in part two.

<sup>10</sup> See e.g. Warner, *From the Beast to the Blonde*; Seifert, *Fairy Tales, Sexuality, and Gender in France*; Hannon, *Fabulous Identities*; Harries, *Twice Upon a Time*; Raynard, *La seconde préciosité*; Trinquet, *Le conte de fées français (1690–1700)*.

<sup>11</sup> Other socio-historical readings of fairy tales include Robert, *Le conte de fées littéraire en France*; Zipes, *Breaking the Magic Spell*; Carney, *Fairy Tale Queens*.

theories of fairy tale interpretation such as the Aarne-Thompson historical-geographical classification of folk tales,<sup>12</sup> and Vladimir Propp's structural theory of the thirty-one basic functions of the folklore genre,<sup>13</sup> and a contextual approach examining the time in which tales were produced. My aim is to provide insight into the history of love by analyzing the vocabulary of emotion used by the *conteuses* to explore different ideas about the nature of love and the gender politics of courtship and marriage in seventeenth-century France.

Despite the importance of love in the *conteuses'* tales, surprisingly little attention has been devoted to analysis of their representation of love. Scholarship commenting on love in the *conteuses'* tales has tended to assume that their tales are literary representations of the code of love developed in seventeenth-century literary salons.<sup>14</sup> Seifert and Sophie Raynard are exceptions, however; both analyze the *conteuses'* representation of love as a literary reworking of discourses inherited from folkloric and chivalric romance traditions.<sup>15</sup> But neither examines the role of love as an emotion with a history that shaped and was shaped by the *conteuses'* tales. This article responds to this gap in *contes de fées* scholarship by analyzing the scripts for love in the *conteuses'* tales using a history of emotion methodology. My aim is to illustrate the influence of seventeenth-century gender and emotion norms on the *conteuses'* representation of love. I argue that this relationship is a symbiotic one in the sense that the *conteuses'* literary representations of love replicate, modify and critique the norms on which their shared vocabulary of emotion is based. Their tales contributed to seventeenth-century understandings of love by imagining different scenarios in which this emotion could be performed in the negotiation of courtship and marriage.

Leaving to one side the question of terminology, namely whether to prefer one of the many alternative terms such as "passion", "affect", "feeling", or "sentiment", this article uses the concept of "emotion scripts" to suggest that emotions are best understood as socially mediated performances of individual affective experience shaped by social norms. In adopting this definition of emotion, my aim is to focus on why certain norms of emotional expression (emotion scripts) are preferred over others. Emotion scripts are practices learnt by members of an emotional community and performed in everyday life. These scripts provide evidence about the social norms shaping emotional expression at a particular moment in time. My use of the term emotion script is influenced by Barbara Rosenwein's concept of emotional communities and Monique Scheer's theory of emotions as a form of practice.<sup>16</sup> I draw on these approaches to emotion to suggest that the *conteuses'* tales developed a set of emotion scripts that critiqued the patriarchal structure of courtship and marriage in seventeenth-century France.

The first part of this article provides a brief overview of the biographical, social and literary connections between the *conteuses*. Part two examines the emotions vocabulary used by the *conteuses* and the relationship between this vocabulary and the semantic shift in seventeenth-century emotions discourse identified by DeJean.

### *A Literary Community of Salon Writers*

Fairy-tale scholars have engaged in much speculation about the personal and professional connections between the *conteuses*. Murat, La Force, and d'Auneuil, each born into illustrious aristocratic families, were related. D'Aulnoy and Lhéritier were also born into aristocratic families; Bernard and Durand to bourgeois families.<sup>17</sup> The elite social status of the *conteuses*

<sup>12</sup> Aarne and Thompson, *The Types of the Folk-Tale*.

<sup>13</sup> Propp, *Morphology of the Folktale*.

<sup>14</sup> See in particular Jasmin, "'Amour, amour, ne nous abandonne point,'" and Raynard, *La seconde préciosité*.

<sup>15</sup> Seifert, *Fairy Tales, Sexuality, and Gender in France*, 101–37; Raynard, *La seconde préciosité*, 239–62.

<sup>16</sup> Rosenwein, *Emotional Communities*; Scheer, "Are Emotions a Kind of Practice?"

<sup>17</sup> Jasmin, "Sophistication and Modernization of the Fairy Tale," 42. See also Jasmin, "Marie-Catherine Le Jumel de Barneville, Baroness d'Aulnoy;" Seifert, "Marie-Jeanne Lhéritier de Villandon." Bernard is thought to belong

is further indicated by their royal connections. Lhéritier's father, Nicholas Lhéritier, was a royal historiographer to Louis XIV, and it is also suggested she was Perrault's niece.<sup>18</sup> La Force was a *filles d'honneur* (maid of honor) to several women in the court of Louis XIV.<sup>19</sup> Several *conteuses* were active participants in Parisian literary salons during the 1690s. D'Aulnoy, Lhéritier and d'Auneuil ran their own salons, and there is some evidence that d'Aulnoy, Bernard, La Force and Murat frequented the weekly salon of the Marquise de Lambert.<sup>20</sup> In her journal, Murat describes her regular attendance at the salon run by d'Aulnoy on rue Saint-Benoît in Paris between 1685 and 1697.<sup>21</sup> It is suggested that Bernard attended the twice-weekly salon Lhéritier inherited from Madeleine de Scudéry.<sup>22</sup> Little is known about d'Auneuil's salon aside from an eighteenth-century statement that it was open to "beaux-esprits" and women writers.<sup>23</sup> When read together, these fragments of biographical information indicate that the *conteuses* were active members of the Parisian literary scene at the turn of the seventeenth century. It is likely that they knew each other, at least by reputation, at the time they produced their tales.

A number of socioliterary connections further support my reading of the *conteuses* as a literary community. Durand and Murat were friends and literary collaborators.<sup>24</sup> Murat expressed admiration for the literary talents of d'Aulnoy, La Force and Bernard in her journal.<sup>25</sup> Lhéritier dedicated one of her tales to Murat and urged her to turn her literary talents to the fairy tale genre.<sup>26</sup> In accepting Lhéritier's challenge, Murat dedicated her third volume of tales to her *salonnière* contemporaries: the charming "modern fairies" whom she praises for their eloquence and beauty.<sup>27</sup> Several of the *conteuses'* tales also refer to tales and characters created by their fellow authors.<sup>28</sup> Murat's *Le Roi Porc* and *Le Turbot* rework the plots of d'Aulnoy's *Le Prince Marcassin* and *Le Dauphin* respectively, and Durand's *Le Prodiges d'amour* inverts the opposition of female beauty and male intelligence in Bernard's *Riquet à la houppe*. Tales by Murat, La Force, Lhéritier and d'Auneuil feature characters who also appear in d'Aulnoy's tales.<sup>29</sup> These dedications and intertextual references provide evidence of the *conteuses'* self-

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to a wealthy merchant family from Rouen: Seifert, "Catherine Bernard," 69. Little is known about the social background of Durand: Robert, *Le conte de fées littéraire en France*, 437.

<sup>18</sup> According to Seifert, Lhéritier's mother, Françoise Le Clerc, was either the niece or sister of Perrault's mother, Paquette Leclerc: "Marie-Jeanne Lhéritier de Villandon," 75–76.

<sup>19</sup> It is also likely that Murat frequented the royal court at Versailles, but the rumour that she first appeared as a sixteen-year-old dressed in Breton peasant costume has been discredited: Patard, "Henriette-Julie de Castelnau, Countess de Murat," 81–82.

<sup>20</sup> Marchal, *Madame de Lambert et son milieu*, 226–27.

<sup>21</sup> Patard, *Journal pour Mademoiselle de Menou*, 180.

<sup>22</sup> Piva, "A la recherche de Catherine Bernard," 42.

<sup>23</sup> "[S]a maison était ouverte à tous les beaux-esprits et à toutes les femmes qui écrivaient": Mayer, "Notice des auteurs, Mme d'Auneuil," 51.

<sup>24</sup> Ten proverb comedies by Durand are published at the end of Murat's *Voyage de campagne* (1699). Durand's 1702 *Les Petits Soupers de l'année 1699, ou Aventures galantes avec l'Origine des fées* pays homage to Murat's 1699 novel: Stedman, *Rococo Fiction in France*, 154–63.

<sup>25</sup> Murat, *Journal pour Mademoiselle de Menou*, 179.

<sup>26</sup> The tale in question was *L'Adroite Princesse ou les Aventures de Finette*.

<sup>27</sup> This dedication, "Épître: Aux Fées Modernes," appears as a preface to *Histoires sublimes et allégoriques*.

<sup>28</sup> Patard argues that these intertextual references provide evidence of a personal relationships between the *conteuses*: Patard, "Madame de Murat et Les Fées Modernes."

<sup>29</sup> Murat's *Anguilette* identifies a genealogical connection between her hero and the heroine in d'Aulnoy's *La Princesse Carpillon*. La Force's *Tourbillon* reimagines the relationship between Zéphyr and Princess Félicité from d'Aulnoy's *L'Île de la Félicité*. Lhéritier's *L'Adroite Princesse* and d'Aulnoy's *Finette Cendron* feature independently-minded heroines named Finette. D'Auneuil's *La Tyrannie des fées détruite* refers to characters from d'Aulnoy's *La Grenouille bien-faisante*, *La Biche au Bois*, and *La Chatte Blanche*.

identification as a literary community and identifies their intended readership as the salon network of female readers and writers.<sup>30</sup>

The most significant connection between the *conteuses* is their shared interest in love and its consequences on the lives of early modern women. Of the sixty-three tales they produced between 1690 and 1709, only one features a heroine whose fate is not affected by love.<sup>31</sup> This tale, Lhéritier's *L'Adroite Princesse ou Les Aventures de Finette*, features an intelligent and resourceful heroine who uses her wit, courage and virtue to rescue herself from the villain of the tale, Riche-Cautéle, who seduces and impregnates her empty-headed sisters. Finette's adventures provide an example of the subversive gender politics in Lhéritier's tales. Finette rescues herself and her sisters from Riche-Cautéle and prevents the husband she marries at the end of the tale from murdering her on her wedding night. This representation of a heroic princess who saves herself illustrates the way in which the *conteuses'* tales sought to reinvent the social identity of women as active, modern individuals. And although Finette marries a handsome prince, she does so from a sense of filial duty and does not fall in love with her husband or anyone else. Her creativity and mastery of conversation shape her destiny; she is not subject to the passion of love.<sup>32</sup> Love between the heroic couple is the primary driver of the narrative in all other tales in the *conteuses'* corpus.

The most important emotion script in the *conteuses'* tales is their representation of love as an essential element of the human condition that must be negotiated by the *conteuses'* heroic couples. It is essential in the sense that life is not complete, and happiness not possible, without love; inescapable to the extent that to be human is to be susceptible to love. Almost without exception, the *conteuses'* heroic couples fall in love with a beautiful heterosexual partner of equal social rank. These protagonists are usually royal or noble, most often princes or kings and princesses or queens.<sup>33</sup> Love is inspired when the heart is moved by beauty, and this involuntary movement of the heart is legible on the body. The *conteuses'* tales drew on a range of vocabulary to emphasize the importance of the heart in understanding love. Tales by d'Aulnoy and Murat repeatedly describe love as a *passion* of the heart.<sup>34</sup> D'Aulnoy, Murat, La Force, Durand and d'Auneuil, conceptualize love as a change in or movement of the heart.<sup>35</sup> La Force, Murat and d'Auneuil also explain love as an *émotion* or *tendresse* felt in the heart.<sup>36</sup> In tales by Bernard, Murat and Lhéritier love is a sentiment or ardor inspired by beauty.<sup>37</sup>

The *conteuses'* representation of love is closely associated with the salon tradition from which the *contes de fées* genre emerged. The link between the salon tradition and the *conteuses'*

<sup>30</sup> This does not necessarily mean that the *conteuses'* readership was limited to the salon. There is some evidence that tales by d'Aulnoy and Murat were republished for a popular audience as *Bibliothèque bleue* in the eighteenth century: Chartier, *The Cultural Uses of Print in Early modern France*, 245–46.

<sup>31</sup> There is some disagreement about this date range and the precise number of tales produced by the *conteuses*. I discuss these issues in detail in my PhD thesis: "Scripting Love and Gender in Fairy Tales by French Women Writers, 1690–1709," 11–15.

<sup>32</sup> I discuss the representation of female agency in this tale, and in tales by d'Aulnoy and Murat, in Reddan, "Thinking through Things."

<sup>33</sup> Seifert identifies the elite class identity of the *conteuses'* protagonists as a sign of nostalgia: *Fairy Tales, Sexuality, and Gender in France*, 111–13.

<sup>34</sup> d'Aulnoy, "Babiole," 511, "La Princesse Carpillon," 659, "Le Pigeon et la Colombe," 861; Murat, "Anguilette," 91–2, 110, "L'île de la Magnificence," 248, 270, "L'Heureuse Peine," 191. All quotes to the *conteuses'* tales are from the following editions: Jasmin, *Madame d'Aulnoy*; Patard, *Contes*; Robert, *Contes*.

<sup>35</sup> La Force, "La Puissance d'amour," 400, "Vert et Bleu," 375; Durand, "La Fée Lubantine," 454, "L'Origine des fées," 463; d'Auneuil, "La Princesse Léonice," 588, "La Tyrannie des fées détruite," 522; Murat, "Anguilette," 92, 94, "L'Aigle au beau bec," 376, "Le Palais de la vengeance," 145; d'Aulnoy, "La Princesse Carpillon," 643.

<sup>36</sup> La Force, "Plus Belle que fée," 321, "Le Pays des délices," 392, "Persinette," 335; Murat, "Le Père et ses quatre fils," 362, "L'Heureuse Peine," 191; d'Auneuil, "La Princesse Léonice," 571, 588.

<sup>37</sup> Bernard, "Le Prince Rosier," 280; Murat, "Le Roi Porc," 211, "L'Heureuse Peine," 191; Lhéritier, "La robe de sincérité," 254.

tales is particularly evident in their representation of the gender politics of love of salon literature. Roswitha Böhm reads the literary community created by the *conteuses* as the continuation of a literary project begun by mid-century *salonnières* Scudéry, Anne-Marie-Louise d'Orléans, duchesse de Montpensier, and Marie-Madeleine Pioche de La Vergne, comtesse de Lafayette.<sup>38</sup> The code of love developed by these authors reinterpreted ideas associated with the medieval courtly love tradition for the modern, female audience of the salon. Their reformulation of medieval tropes such as the civilizing effect of love, male subservience to the female beloved and the suffering caused by love, challenged seventeenth-century gender roles by emphasizing the agency of women in courtship and marriage.<sup>39</sup> As I discuss further in part two, Scudéry's redefinition of love as *tendresse* proposed an extension in the emotional agency of women by developing a model of courtship that allowed women to accept or reject marriage partners based on their personal *inclination*.<sup>40</sup> The *conteuses'* tales reflect the gender politics of *tendre* in allowing their heroines to choose their spouse and resist arranged marriages.<sup>41</sup>

### *A Shared Vocabulary of Emotion*

The heart is the key to understanding desire for love in the *conteuses'* tales. It is a key element of their shared vocabulary of emotion and an important feature of the model of semantic innovation developed by DeJean. She argues that representation of the heart as the “control center” of the emotions was a prominent theme in seventeenth-century French literature.<sup>42</sup> DeJean suggests that this marked a critical shift in French emotions discourse in which the heart replaced the soul as the seat of the emotions.<sup>43</sup> She identifies three phases of semantic innovation in the development of this vocabulary of feeling. The first was René Descartes' proposal of *émotion* as a replacement for the term *passion* in *Les Passions de l'âme* in 1649. The second coincided with the emergence of Madeleine de Scudéry's concept of *tendresse* or *tendre* as a way of distinguishing between *amour* (love) and *amitié* (friendship) between 1650 and 1670. The third, 1670 to 1695, was a period of consolidation in which a semantic cluster of terms—*sentiment*, *sensibilité*, *sentir*, *tendresse*, *tendre*, *amour*, *aimer*—replaced *passion* as a synonym for love.<sup>44</sup>

The *conteuses'* tales were published at the end of the third phase of innovation and their scripts for love reflect the semantic clustering associated with this phase. An example of this semantic clustering is the *conteuses'* use of the terms *sentiment*, *tendre*, *tendresse*, and *inclination* in conjunction with the terms *passion*, *cœur*, and *amour*.<sup>45</sup> In one paragraph of description in Murat's *L'Île de la Magnificence*, love is a *passion* of the heart, a revolution in the *sentiments* caused by “the most delicate love”, and a jealousy, impatience, or lack felt

<sup>38</sup> Böhm, “La participation des fées modernes à la création d'une mémoire féminine,” 130.

<sup>39</sup> The salon code of love was also influenced by Neoplatonism, in particular idealisation of beauty as the inspiration for love and as an external sign of virtue: Lougee, *Le paradis des femmes*, 34–39. See also Hannon, *Fabulous Identities*, 97–98; Duggan, “Lovers, Salon, and State,” 17–21.

<sup>40</sup> See the discussion below under the heading “*Navigating the politics of tendre*”.

<sup>41</sup> The moral to d'Aulnoy's *L'Oiseau Bleu* (222), which warns that marriages not based on love are a “miserable slavery” (“un funeste esclavage”).

<sup>42</sup> DeJean, *Ancients against Moderns*, 85.

<sup>43</sup> *ibid.*, 78–88.

<sup>44</sup> DeJean cites Sévigné's 9 February 1671 letter to her daughter, and a 1692 sermon by Bourdaloue as examples of this semantic clustering: *ibid.*, 86–88.

<sup>45</sup> In my analysis of the *conteuses'* emotions terminology, I have italicized emotion terms to distinguish between their historical usage and their modern English equivalents. This distinction is particularly important for *émotion/emotion*. The modern concept of emotion as a psychological category of analysis is the legacy of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century debates about the physical and mental states that seventeenth-century French theorists referred to as *passions*, or, with less frequency, *affections*: Dixon, *From Passions to Emotions*, 1–25. For similar reasons, I have not translated the term *tendresse* and its adjectival and verbal forms.

strongly in the heart.<sup>46</sup> The hero in d'Aulnoy's *Le Pigeon et la Colombe* refers alternatively to his attachment to the heroine as a *passion* and as a *tendresse*, and he reproaches himself for both feelings.<sup>47</sup>

#### Passion, *embodiment and love at first sight*

According to DeJean, the semantic innovation proposed by Descartes in his 1649 *Les Passions de l'âme* was a spectacular failure in the sense that the term *émotion* never played a significant role in French affective vocabulary.<sup>48</sup> The same is true in the *conteuses'* tales. The term *émotion* appears rarely, and when it does, it refers to a strange or elusive sensation in the heart.<sup>49</sup> Lhéritier and La Force are the only *conteuses* who refer to the effect of emotion on the soul (*âme*), but in doing so they attribute this effect to a change in the heart caused by the sight of the beloved.<sup>50</sup> This is at odds with Descartes' preference for *émotion* as the terminology that best conveyed a sense of change or alteration in the soul, as well as the force of emotion as something that agitates or shakes the soul.<sup>51</sup> In making his case for replacing *passion* with *émotion*, Descartes' treatise drew on the etymological origins of *émotion* as a term referring to political or social agitation (*émotion populaire*), or bodily movement.<sup>52</sup> This conceptualization of emotion as a force that agitates the feeling subject appears frequently in the *conteuses'* tales. But unlike Descartes, the *conteuses* use the term *passion* to describe the embodied experience of love as a force difficult to govern. Their tales also insist on the heart as the location of *passion*. This reflects a long tradition of belief about the affective role of the heart.<sup>53</sup> Descartes explicitly rejected this tradition on the basis that the only reason for it was that the *passions* are felt as though they are located in the heart.<sup>54</sup>

The legacy DeJean attributes to the first phase of semantic innovation is Descartes' questioning of *passion* as the best term for describing the mental and bodily states now broadly categorized as feeling or emotion. DeJean suggests that Descartes' treatise started a discussion that led to the second and third phases of semantic innovation.<sup>55</sup> Despite evidence that Descartes' work was read and discussed in seventeenth-century salons, his critique of the term *passion* does not appear to have influenced the *conteuses*.<sup>56</sup> *Passion* is one of the most important terms in their shared vocabulary of emotion. Lhéritier describes love as a "turbulent

<sup>46</sup> "quoique l'amour soit une passion que l'on ne connaît ici que par des livres, je sens bien qu'elle s'est emparée de mon cœur, et que je ne puis plus vivre heureux sans la possession de cette incomparable personne ; j'ai senti dans le temps d'une seule révolution les sentiments de l'amour les plus délicats ; la jalousie, l'absence et l'impatience se font sentir à mon cœur avec toutes leurs forces." Murat, "L'Île de la Magnificence," 270.

<sup>47</sup> d'Aulnoy, "Le Pigeon et la Colombe," 854.

<sup>48</sup> DeJean, *Ancients against Moderns*, 79–82.

<sup>49</sup> Murat, "Jeune et Belle," 121; d'Aulnoy, "Le Pigeon et la Colombe," 863; Murat, "L'Heureuse Peine," 191; La Force, "Plus Belle que fée," 321.

<sup>50</sup> La Force, "La Puissance d'amour," 400; Lhéritier, "Les Enchantements de l'Éloquence," 81.

<sup>51</sup> "Mais on peut encore mieux les nommer des émotions de l'âme ... ce nom peut être attribué à tous les changements qui arrivent en elle ... il n'y en a point d'autres qui l'agitent et l'ébranlent si fort que font ces passions": Descartes, *Les Passions de L'âme*, I:28.

<sup>52</sup> DeJean, *Ancients against Moderns*, 80–81; Dixon, "'Emotion': The History of a Keyword in Crisis," 340; Merlin-Kajman, "Introduction," 9.

<sup>53</sup> This tradition is linked to humoral theory, in particular Galenic medical principles, and can be traced back to classical thinkers including Aristotle and Hippocrates: Alberti, *Matters of the Heart*, 3–4, 19–13; Jager, *The Book of the Heart*, 2–5.

<sup>54</sup> Descartes argues that the feeling of alteration in the heart caused by the *passions* is produced by a nerve descending to the heart from the brain. He concludes that the *passions* are located in the pineal gland: *Les Passions de L'âme*, I:31–33.

<sup>55</sup> DeJean, *Ancients against Moderns*, 81–82.

<sup>56</sup> Erica Harth, *Cartesian Women*, 98–99.

*passion*” that cannot be concealed from the observation by others.<sup>57</sup> Durand warns that one is not the master of one’s self when agitated by the *passion* of love.<sup>58</sup> Bernard blames *passion*, which she defines as the jealousy caused by love, for destroying the marriages of several couples in *Le Prince Rosier*.<sup>59</sup> This conceptualization of emotion as a turbulent force that agitates the body echoes Descartes’ definition of *émotion* as a movement or change affecting the feeling subject. This passions theory of emotion was an important influence on seventeenth-century emotions discourse.<sup>60</sup> It emphasized the power of love as an uncontrollable force and is associated with a long literary tradition exemplified by love at first sight and the figure of Cupid and his arrows.<sup>61</sup>

The *conteuses*’ representations of the embodied experience of love is a key feature of their emotion scripts. Like many of their early modern contemporaries, the *conteuses*’ tales represent the body as a surface on which traces of the passions appear as external signs of interior agitation. This conceptualization of emotion focuses on physical changes in the body such as changes in complexion like blushing or paleness, and the bodily movements of trembling, fainting, tears, and sighs.<sup>62</sup> The *conteuses*’ characters display many of the external signs of the passions. Eloquent or expressive eyes revealing love appear in tales by d’Aulnoy, Murat, Lhéritier, La Force, and d’Auneuil.<sup>63</sup> Blushing, fainting, and tears reveal love in tales by d’Aulnoy, Lhéritier, La Force, Murat, and Bernard.<sup>64</sup>

With two notable exceptions, the *conteuses*’ tales portray the bodily expression of emotion as an involuntary revelation. In d’Aulnoy’s *Le Pigeon et la Colombe*, Constancia’s face betrays the secrets of her heart when the words she utters deny her feelings.<sup>65</sup> Eloquent eyes speak of love without a conscious decision by the feeling subject to reveal the sentiments of their heart in Murat’s *Anguilette* and *Le Père et ses quatre fils*, and in La Force’s *Vert et Bleu*.<sup>66</sup> Lhéritier’s Léonore and Anaxaride are the only characters who do not conform to this model of emotional expression. In *La robe de sincérité*, Lhéritier identifies Anaxaride’s “noble education” as the reason she has an unusual degree of self-control. She maintains a dignified silence in response to unjust treatment by her jealous spouse, and gives “no external sign of her

<sup>57</sup> Lhéritier, “Ricdin-Ricdon,” 161.

<sup>58</sup> “[O]n n’est guère maîtresse de soi lorsqu’on est agitée de cette passion [amour]”: Durand, “Le Prodige d’amour”, 490.

<sup>59</sup> Bernard, “Le Prince Rosier,” 279.

<sup>60</sup> See e.g. James, *Passion and Action*, 1–14; Paster, Rowe, and Floyd-Wilson, *Reading the Early Modern Passions*.

<sup>61</sup> Love at first sight has had a profound influence on romantic literature in a range of genres including twelfth-century troubadour and *trouvère* tales and *amor de lonh* composed by the *conteuses*’ literary ancestors: Asaro, “Unmasking the Truth about *Amor de Lonh*”; Monson, “The Warrior’s Return in the *Chansons de Toile*.” On the importance of the eyes and heart in Renaissance representations of romantic love, see Zarri, “Eyes and Heart, Eros and Agape.” Cupid, in his guise as the god of love, appears in several of the *conteuses*’ tales. On the significance of the Cupid and Psyche myth in seventeenth-century French culture, see Birberick, “Rewriting Curiosity,” 134–48.

<sup>62</sup> See in particular Desjardins, *Le corps parlant*, 1–6, part 1. See also Descartes’ typology of the external signs of the passions: *Les Passions de L’âme*, II:112–35.

<sup>63</sup> d’Aulnoy, “L’Oiseau bleu,” 193, “Le Mouton,” 417; Murat, “La Fée Princesse,” 385, “Anguilette,” 99; “Le Père et ses quatre fils,” 359; Lhéritier, “La robe de sincérité,” 236, “Ricdin-Ricdon,” 161; La Force, “Tourbillon,” 359; d’Auneuil, “La Princesse Léonice,” 575.

<sup>64</sup> On blushing, see Lhéritier, “La robe de sincérité,” 201, 263; La Force, “Belle Belle que Fée,” 315; d’Aulnoy, “Le Pigeon et la Colombe,” 857, “La Princesse Carpillon,” 643, “Belle Belle, ou le Chevalier Fortuné,” 810; Murat, “Le Père et ses quatre fils,” 362. On fainting, see Murat, “La Fée Princesse,” 392; d’Aulnoy, “Le Prince Lutin,” 252. On tears, see Bernard, “Le Prince Rosier,” 282.

<sup>65</sup> “Pourquoi me cacher vos sentiments, Constancia ? ... votre visage trahit le secret de votre cœur, vous aimez”: d’Aulnoy, “Le Pigeon et la Colombe,” 859.

<sup>66</sup> Murat, “Anguilette,” 99, “Le Père et ses quatre fils,” 359; La Force, “Vert et Bleu,” 359.



thoughts”.<sup>67</sup> In *Marmoisan*, Léonore’s behavior shows that she “knows how to rule her passions”.<sup>68</sup> Her heart is not insensible to the prince who falls in love with her, but she refuses to succumb to the weakness of loving someone whose social status means she cannot admit her feelings without damaging her reputation. She does not agree to marry the prince until after his father approves their union.<sup>69</sup>

The idea of love as an involuntary and immediate passion underpins the emotion script of love at first sight. The typical scenario involves a meeting between the heroic couple in which both are struck by the beauty of the other.<sup>70</sup> The heart is moved by admiration, which is quickly followed by love. A version of this scene appears in tales by all the *conteuses*. In d’Aulnoy’s *L’Oranger et l’Abeille*, the hero’s *passion* for the beautiful heroine increases more in four days than most ordinary *passions* in four years despite the language barrier between them.<sup>71</sup> The hero in La Force’s *L’Enchanteur* falls in love with the sleeping Adelis and cannot resist seizing her in his arms. Fortuitously, the beautiful Adelis had already fallen in love with the prince’s portrait, and thus her distress upon waking in the arms of a strange man is short-lived.<sup>72</sup> The sight of a beautiful portrait inspires passion in tales by Bernard, Murat and d’Aulnoy.<sup>73</sup> La Force’s *L’Enchanteur* describes two different scenarios of love at first sight: one produces the “naturel *sentiment*” of *inclination*; the other the “grand *passion*” of love.<sup>74</sup>

### *Navigating the politics of tendre*

The second phase of semantic innovation identified by DeJean saw the introduction of several terms, most notably *sentiment*, *tendre* and *tendresse*, as possible replacements for *passion*. DeJean names Scudéry as the key figure in development of a relational vocabulary of emotion that replaced the medical connotations of *passion* with a psychological definition of emotion as a shared experience affecting subject and object.<sup>75</sup> In Scudéry’s ten-volume novels, *Artamène, ou le grand Cyrus* (1649–1653), and *Clélie, histoire romaine* (1654–1660), characters are affected by the bodily upheaval of *émotion*, but they also feel, and strive to control, the *sentiments* in their hearts.<sup>76</sup> Scudéry’s suggestion that emotions can be controlled or regulated by the feeling subject is an important divergence from the passions theory of emotion that emphasized the turbulent, disruptive force of emotion as an involuntary bodily experience onto which control is imposed.<sup>77</sup> This is particularly important in *Clélie*, in which Scudéry developed the concept of *tendresse* as a set of practices that created “a certain

<sup>67</sup> “la noble éducation qu’elle avait eue la rendant beaucoup plus maîtresse d’elle-même ... elle ne donna aucune marque extérieure de ce qu’elle pensait”: Lhéritier, “La robe de sincérité,” 231–32.

<sup>68</sup> “Notre héroïne n’était pas insensible, mais elle savait régner ses passions; et quand elle faisait réflexion à l’inégalité des conditions, elle se disait que le prince ne songerait à elle que pour se faire un amusement”: Lhéritier, “Marmoisan,” 61.

<sup>69</sup> *ibid.*, 63–64.

<sup>70</sup> The Neoplatonic association between beauty and virtue is an important *topos* in classical and medieval literature. Robert identifies the association between physical beauty and moral goodness as an essential component of the *romanesque* schema in *contes de fées: Le conte de fées littéraire en France*, 211–13.

<sup>71</sup> “sa passion pour la belle Aimée avait fait plus de progrès en quatre jours, que les passions ordinaires n’en font en quatre ans”: d’Aulnoy, “L’Oranger et l’Abeille,” 345.

<sup>72</sup> La Force, “L’Enchanteur,” 346.

<sup>73</sup> Bernard, “Le Prince Rosier,” 280; d’Aulnoy, “La Biche au Bois,” 691–94; Murat, “L’Île de la Magnificence,” 270, “Le Roi Porc,” 211, “L’Heureuse Peine,” 191.

<sup>74</sup> La Force, “L’Enchanteur,” 340, 346.

<sup>75</sup> In making this argument, DeJean distinguishes between medical and scientific connotations: *Ancients against Moderns*, 82–83.

<sup>76</sup> *ibid.*, 83–84.

<sup>77</sup> Descartes, *Les Passions de L’âme*, I:45–50, II:138, 144–48, III:160. See also Brown, “The Rationality of Cartesian Passions,” 270–75.

*sensibilité* of the heart”.<sup>78</sup> In transforming love into *tendresse*, Scudéry redefined love as a rational social performance enacted by individuals according to a set of practices, or to use the terminology of this article, emotion scripts.

The terms *sentiment* and *tendre* appear frequently in the *conteuses*' scripts for love. *Sentiment* is used as a term describing a variety of emotional states; *tendre* refers to love. Both terms are associated with the affective role of the heart. Except for Bernard, whose tales emphasize the suffering caused by *passion*, all the *conteuses* refer to love as a *sentiment* of the heart.<sup>79</sup> *Tendre* appears as an adjective modifying love, lovers, hearts, eyes, sentiments, and spouses.<sup>80</sup> The presence of *tendresse* in the heart, or the susceptibility of the heart to *tendresse* is used to describe the effect of love in tales by d'Aulnoy and Murat.<sup>81</sup> The definition of *tendre* as a faithful, constant love that leads to eternal happiness is a particularly strong theme in tales in d'Aulnoy, La Force, and Murat that end with the celebration of a wedding, or, on occasion, multiple weddings.<sup>82</sup> In these tales, the representation of *tendre* as an emotion that can be managed by the feeling subject is an important element of the depiction of love as a positive experience. It is the cultivation of *tendresse* that allows heroic couples to transform their mutual *inclination* into a successful union.

The concept of *inclination* is the key to understanding the subversive nature of the gender politics of *tendre*. According to DeJean, *inclination* can be translated as a “penchant” or “propensity” that is related to, but distinct from, love at first sight. In *Clélie*, *inclination* is a force that justifies resistance to arranged marriages by allowing women the agency to choose between admirers.<sup>83</sup> The distinction between *inclination* and love at first sight is an important one. Unlike love at first sight, which emphasizes the violent nature of love as an immediate and involuntary passion that seizes the hearts of both partners, *inclination* allows women to exercise a measure of control over their interpersonal relationships by reinventing courtship as a contractual negotiation controlled by women.<sup>84</sup> Identifying *inclination* as the foundation for courtship provides women with a justification for rejecting suitors, as Clélie does when she resists her father's choice of Horace as her intended husband.<sup>85</sup> It also provides a method for developing a code of conduct governing the behavior of suitors, as Scudéry does in the *carte de Tendre*. And while *inclination* might predispose a woman to prefer one suitor over another, her choice is not inevitable.

<sup>78</sup> This is the definition given by Clélie in her explanation of the towns one must pass through when navigating the *carte de Tendre*: *Clélie*, 1:211.

<sup>79</sup> d'Aulnoy, “Le Rameau d'Or,” 309, “L'Oranger et l'Abeille,” 338, “Belle Belle, ou le Chevalier Fortuné,” 823; Lhéritier, “Les Enchantements de l'Éloquence,” 161; La Force, “La Puissance d'Amour,” 400; Murat, “Anguilette,” 110, “Jeune et Belle,” 124, “L'Heureuse Peine,” 180, “Le Roi Porc,” 211; Durand, “L'Origine des fées,” 463–64; d'Auneuil, “La Princesse Léonice,” 573.

<sup>80</sup> d'Aulnoy, “L'Île de la Félicité,” 138, 140, “Le Prince Lutin,” 243, “La Belle aux Cheveux d'Or,” 187, “L'Oranger et l'Abeille,” 356, 363, “Fortunée,” 485, “Le Rameau d'Or,” 319, “Serpentin Vert,” 594, “Le Pigeon et la Colombe,” 869, “Le Dauphin,” 1017; Lhéritier, “Ricdin-Ricdon,” 161, “La robe de sincérité,” 249; Murat, “Le Parfait Amour,” 83–84, “Le Sauvage,” 289, “Jeune et Belle,” 121, “Anguilette,” 99, 105, 110, “Tourbillon,” 371, “Le Pays des délices,” 397, “La Fée Princesse,” 385; La Force, “Persinette,” 338, “L'Enchanteur,” 354–55; d'Auneuil, “La Princesse Léonice,” 583, “L'Inconstance punie ou L'Origine des cornes,” 722.

<sup>81</sup> d'Aulnoy, “Babiole,” 511; Murat, “Le Père et ses quatre fils,” 362, “Le Roi Porc,” 211, “Le Palais de la vengeance,” 145, “Anguilette,” 99, “Jeune et Belle,” 129.

<sup>82</sup> See d'Aulnoy's *Gracieuse et Percinet*, *La Belle aux Cheveux d'Or*, *L'Oiseau Bleu*, *L'Oranger et l'Abeille*, *Le Rameau d'Or*, *La Princesse Carpillon*, *La Grenouille bien-faisante*, *La Biche au Bois*, *La Princesse Belle Étoile et le Prince Chéri*; La Force's *Plus Belle que fée*, *L'Enchanteur*, *Tourbillon*, *Vert et Bleu*, *La Bonne Femme*; and Murat's *Le Parfait Amour*, *Jeune et Belle*, *Le Prince des Feuilles*, *Le Sauvage*, *Le Père et ses quatre fils*, *La Fée Princesse*.

<sup>83</sup> DeJean, *Tender Geographies*, 87–88. See also Peters, *Mapping Discord*, 112.

<sup>84</sup> DeJean, *Tender Geographies*, 87–88.

<sup>85</sup> *Clélie, histoire romaine*, 1:412–25. See also Peters, *Mapping Discord*, 112–13.

The reformulation of marriage and courtship based on the concept of *inclination* is one of the most important emotion scripts in seventeenth-century salon literature. However, the term “mariage d’inclination”, which DeJean identifies as the legacy of salon criticism of arranged marriages, did not enter the French lexicon until its appearance in the Robert Dictionary in the nineteenth century.<sup>86</sup> This is reflected in the *conteuses’* tales, which contain only a small number of references to the terms *inclination* or *mariage d’inclination*, even though the reformulation of marriage on the basis of personal choice is a key theme in the *conteuses’* emotion scripts for love.<sup>87</sup> The subversive potential of *inclination* as a justification for extramarital liaisons is demonstrated by La Force’s use of the term in *L’Enchanteur* to describe the adulterous relationship between Isène la Belle and the enchanter who seduced her on her wedding night. After being lured from her marital bed by a secret (magical) power,<sup>88</sup> Isène feels such a “great *inclination*” towards the enchanter that La Force concludes that it is a “natural *sentiment*” that could not have been produced by magic.<sup>89</sup> Isène is punished by her husband and son when her infidelity is revealed but she is eventually reunited with the enchanter. Their “long, ardent and faithful love” is rewarded with permission to marry at the end of the tale.<sup>90</sup> Without the concept of *inclination* to legitimize Isène’s adulterous relationship as a faithful, loving union, it is difficult to see how La Force would have been able to produce this unconventional ending.

#### *A Semantic Cluster of Scripts for Love*

The aim of this article was to analyze the scripts for love in the *conteuses’* tales. Love is the central theme in their tales, but their representation of the nature and effects of love does not conform to the “love conquers all” script associated with the fairy tale genre. The *conteuses’* scripts for love reflect the historical context in which they were created by questioning the idealization of love as the ultimate happy ending for women. The *conteuses’* conceptualization of love as a movement of the heart legible on the body combines elements of the vocabulary of embodiment in Descartes’ *Les Passions de l’âme* and Scudéry’s framing of love as *tendresse* in *Clélie*. The shared vocabulary of emotion developed in the *conteuses’* tales also illustrates the semantic clustering DeJean identifies as a feature of the third phase of semantic innovation in seventeenth-century French emotions discourse. In using a variety of nouns and verbs to refer to love—*amour*, *passion*, *tendresse*, *sentiment*, *inclination*, *ardeur*, *désir*—the *conteuses’* tales use vocabulary from all three phases of semantic innovation.

The *conteuses’* choice of affective vocabulary has important conceptual implications as it identifies the presence of multiple theories of emotion in their scripts for love. These scripts do not embrace the passions theory of emotion to the exclusion of Scudéry’s psychological definition of love as *tendresse*. Their tales draw on aspects of both theories of emotion and emphasize the extent to which change in emotion scripts is not a linear progression but a messy and incomplete process in which old and new norms mingle and overlap. This reading of the *conteuses’* tales does not sit comfortably with the idea that fairy tales offer a timeless perspective on love that can be distilled into a single emotion script. The *conteuses’* conversation about love used a shared emotional vocabulary to articulate a range of different perspectives about love and the gender politics of courtship and marriage in seventeenth-century France.

<sup>86</sup> DeJean, *Tender Geographies*, 87, 109–15.

<sup>87</sup> See especially Lhéritier, “L’Adroite Princesse,” 111; Murat, “Le Turbot,” 348; d’Auneuil, “La Tyrannie des fées détruite,” 518.

<sup>88</sup> “[U]ne puissance secrète”: La Force, “L’Enchanteur,” 339.

<sup>89</sup> “Il se mit à genoux devant elle, lui dit qu’il aimait, et elle sentit une si grande inclination pour lui que toute la magie ne peut former rien de semblable, s’il n’est pris dans un sentiment naturel”: *ibid.*, 340.

<sup>90</sup> “[Le mariage] était bien juste de récompenser une si longue amour, si ardente et si fidèle”: *ibid.*, 354.

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#### Appendix: Tales produced by the *conteuses* between 1690 and 1709

Author	Date	Tale
d’Aulnoy	1690	L’Île de la Félicité
	1697	Gracieuse et Percinet
		La Belle aux Cheveux d’Or
		L’Oiseau Bleu
		Le Prince Lutin
		La Princesse Printanière
		La Princesse Rosette
		Le Rameau d’Or
		L’Oranger et l’Abeille
		La Bonne Petite Souris
		Le Mouton
		Finette Cendron
		Fortunée
		Babiolo
		Le Nain Jaune
		Serpentin Vert
	1698	La Princesse Carpillon
		La Grenouille Bienfaisante
		La Biche au Bois
		La Chatte Blanche
	Belle Belle, ou le Chevalier Fortuné	
	Le Pigeon et la Colombe	
	La Princesse Belle Étoile et le Prince Chéri	
	Le Prince Marcassin	
	Le Dauphin	

<b>Author</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Tale</b>
Bernard	1696	Le Prince Rosier Riquet à la houppe
Lhéritier	1696	Marmoisan ou L'Innocente Tromperie Les Enchantements de l'Éloquence ou les effets de la douceur L'Adroite Princesse ou Les Aventures de Finette
	1705	Ricdin-Ricdon La robe de sincérité
La Force	1697	Plus Belle que Fée Persinette L'Enchanteur Tourbillon Vert et Bleu Le Pays des délices La Puissance d'Amour La Bonne Femme
Murat	1698	Le Parfait Amour Anguilette Jeune et Belle Le Palais de la vengeance Le Prince des Feuilles L'Heureuse Peine
	1699	Le Roi Porc L'Île de la Magnificence Le Sauvage Le Turbot Le Père et ses quatre fils
	1708– 09	L'Aigle au beau bec La Fée Princesse Peine Perdue
Durand	1699	La Fée Lubantine
	1702	L'Origine des fées Le Prodiges d'amour
d'Auneuil	1702	La Tyrannie des fées détruite Agatie princesse des Scythes La Princesse Léonice Le Prince Curieux L'Inconstance punie, ou L'Origine des cornes
	1709	La Princesse Patientine dans la forêt d'Érimente